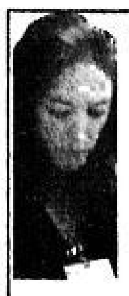


WORLD / A22

Love-crazed astronaut out on bail; ordered to stay away from her romantic rival

WORLD/ A22

3rd letter bomb in 3 days explodes in Britain, hurts 4

LIVING STARS/ H6

Carmi Martin, the actress who's also a home stylist, lives in virtual art gallery

SPORTS / A24

Mamiit-led RP Davis Cuppers favored vs Pakistanis

Compact
Action! Packed!

see Page G4

Salceda appointed Palace chief of staff

By Gil C. Cabacungan Jr.

A FORMER STUDENT OF PRESIDENT MACAPAGAL-Arroyo's at the Ateneo de Manila University is to become her main Palace aide.

Rep. Jose Ma. Sarte "Joey" Salceda, the 36-year-old who is acknowledged as the main architect of the President's fiscal reform program, has been appointed the new Presidential Chief of Staff.

SALCEDA/ A8

PHILIPPINE DAILY INQUIRER
BALANCED NEWS, FEARLESS VIEWS
Friday, February 9, 2007 ★★ 9 sections / Vol. 22 / No. 63 P18 website: www.inquirer.net

This is news: Man bites dog; dog bites back

BITE LANG? DITO, MAN EAT DOG!

WELLINGTON, NEW Zealand—Man bites dog; dog bites back.

That was the sequence when Alsatian police dog Edge cornered two suspects on a cliffside after a grocery store robbery in Napier, New Zealand, police

THIS IS NEWS/ A17

JV out of UNO; Roco in

Erap: A painful decision to ensure opposition unity

RODEL ROTONI

ROCO: Like Abraham's sacrifice

By Norman Bordadora and Jerome Aning

SAN JUAN MAYOR JOSEPH VICTOR "JV" EJERCITO is pulling out of the senatorial race, and Raul Roco's widow appears to be in line to take his slot in the United Opposition (UNO) ticket.

Ousted President Joseph Estrada himself said yesterday that he had convinced Ejercito, his son by former actress Guia Gomez, to drop his plan of running for a Senate seat and instead seek reelection in the family bailiwick of San Juan.

Asked who he wanted to take his son's place in the slate, Estrada said UNO's selection committee had plenty of "principled oppositionists to choose from."

But he singled out Sonia Roco, the widow of the two-time presidential candidate and former senator, for praise: "She is an example of a principled oppositionist. She has said that she can't in conscience run under [the administration's] Unity ticket because her late husband was one of those who had called on Ms Arroyo to resign."

"I think this move is very admirable. It reminds me of Abraham sacrificing his son. That sacrifice is going to immensely benefit the opposition," Roco told the INQUIRER last night.

"The whole idea of coming up with a united opposition gives the electorate a sense of credibility that the opposition function is really to demand accountability, transparency and honest governance for their past service record. This can be tested in the election," Roco told the INQUIRER when sought for her reaction to Estrada's move.

She said Estrada's offer for her to join the United Opposition was relayed to her by Makati Mayor Jejomar Binay through lawyer Lorna Kapunan, an official of Aksyon Demokratiko, her late husband's party.

An Estrada camp insider, who

JV OUT/ A6

EJERCITO bows to father's wish

First day in the life of prisoner No. 517

By Tarra Quismundo
and Leila B. Salaverria

ON HIS FIRST NIGHT IN JAIL, former Batangas Gov. Antonio "Tony" Leviste slept on the lower deck of a double-bunk bed, the only space he could get inside a cell crammed with more than 70 strangers.

In the company of crime suspects whose fates were uncertain as his, the 67-year-old businessman spent Day 1 of his incarceration at the Makati City Jail (MCJ) while awaiting trial for the nonbailable charge of murder the state filed against him for the fatal shooting of his aide Rafael de las Alas.

While in a place all too different, too crowded for the millionaire businessman, MCJ's detainee No. 517 chose to go it alone inside Selda Tres (Cell No. 3), requesting before he was locked up that his family not visit him yet.

"Since he got there last night, we haven't visited him yesterday [because] Dad requested us not to go with him," his youngest daughter Toni said at a press briefing yesterday afternoon.

"(A)t least for the first day, [we should] not visit him so that he can, I guess, suffer on his own,

FIRST DAY/ A8

ALL IN THE FAMILY, and then some. With mom, former President Cory Aquino and youngest sister Kris in attendance wearing the family color, Rep. Benigno "Noynoy" Aquino III files his certificate of candidacy for senator at the Comelec on Thursday. Flanking the Aquinos are Sen. Mar Roxas (left) and James Yap, Kris' husband.

EDWIN BACASMAS

'NO DONE DEAL'

It's Friday, Wednesday Group still out

By TJ Burgonio
and Michael Lim Ubac

THE REPORTED PLAN OF SENATORS Ralph Recto and Joker Arroyo to join the administration's Team Unity ticket is not a done deal, according to Senate President Manuel Villar, their colleague in the Wednesday Group.

"That's not final yet. Everything is pure speculation at this time. We're still talking, and we have not closed the door to any possibility," Villar yesterday told reporters at the Senate session hall.

He added that any decision by the members of the Wednesday Group was to be finalized last night.

Recto himself said in a text message that contrary to the announcement of Speaker Jose de Venecia, he had not made any plans to join the administration slate.

"No decision yet. I did not appoint anyone to speak for me. I will make my own formal announcement!" Recto said.

Arroyo could not be reached for comment at press time.

But Sen. Edgardo Angara, who had earlier accepted the administration's invitation to join Team Unity, said his information was that Recto and Arroyo were "in the bag."

"As far as I know, they're part of it," Angara said.

Villar, Recto and Arroyo, together with Senate Majority Leader Francis Pangilinan, comprise the Senate Wednesday Group.

IT'S FRIDAY/ A6

Senate raps Gonzalez, Puno over Iloilo assault

By TJ Burgonio

THE SENATE HAS RECOMMENDED the censure of Interior Secretary Ronaldo Puno, his undersecretary and Justice Secretary Raul Gonzalez over the "premature enforcement" of the Ombudsman's dismissal order against Iloilo Gov. Niel Tupas Sr. last month.

The Senate committees on public order and local government also recommended that the Commission on Human Rights investigate, identify and prosecute the 200 members of the raiding team led by Chief Supt. Wilfredo Dulay of the Regional Mobile Group (RMG).

The committees made the recommendations in a report of their inquiry into the Jan. 17 violent police assault on the capitol that marred the move to serve the order on Tupas.

The chamber adopted the report late Wednesday night.

The assault, highlighted by TV images of policemen in full battle gear training their guns on the governor's supporters and smashing glass panels at the capitol, caused a furor among lawmakers, particularly Tupas' party mates in the Liberal Party.

Only when the Court of Appeals in Cebu City issued a 60-day temporary restraining order on the enforcement of the dismissal order did the assault stop.

The Ombudsman had ordered the dis-

SENATE/ A17

Malik: General, Sulu execs raised money

By Fe Zamora

PANAMAO, SULU—MORO NATIONAL LIBeration Front leader Ustadz Malik said yesterday that Maj. Gen. Benjamin Dolorfino, Sulu Rep. Munir Arbison and Sulu Gov. Ben Loong helped put together the P350,000 in "goodwill money" that Malik accepted before Dolorfino and his men left this camp last week.

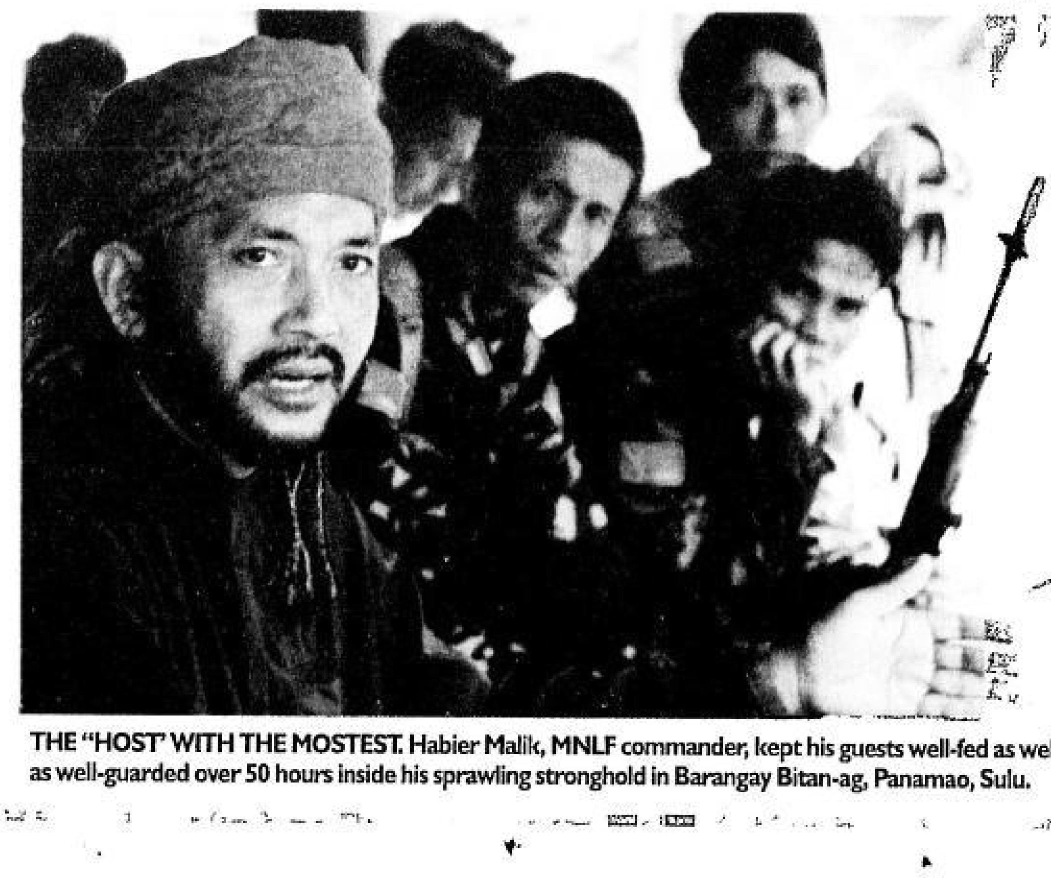
He said that Col. Demetrio Ramon of Task Force Comet and Mayor Elai Asmadon of Lugus town also helped raise the goodwill money.

"Is that the ransom money? You better ask those people," Malik said.

Dolorfino, Undersecretary for Peace Ramon Santos and 19 other government officials and soldiers went to the MNLF camp in Panamao on Friday to discuss the implementation of the 1996 peace agreement between the MNLF and the government.

After the initial talks, Dolorfino and his group prepared to leave but Malik said he urged them to stay overnight. The group then spent two nights in the camp.

MALIK/ A10



REM ZAMORA

THE "HOST' WITH THE MOSTEST. Habier Malik, MNLF commander, kept his guests well-fed as well as well-guarded over 50 hours inside his sprawling stronghold in Barangay Bitan-ag, Panamao, Sulu.

First female hostage in Nigeria is Filipina

LAGOS—A FILIPINO WOMAN and a Frenchman became the latest kidnap victims in the oil-rich Niger Delta when they were seized in two separate incidents on Wednesday in Port Harcourt, Nigeria's oil capital, industry sources said yesterday.

The Filipino was identified as Josie Beth Orasan, 37, of San Jose, Mindoro Occidental, who is married to the Iranian general manager of Shahpar International Co. Ltd.

She was seized by armed men around midday close to a bank on Stadium Road in the city center. The assailants immediately switched off her phone and took her to an unknown destination, police sources said.

"She was probably on her way to the bank. She was taken close to a bank," Felix Ogbaudu, a state police commissioner, said.

"As far as I know this is the first-ever female hostage in Nigeria, certainly in the last two years," a private security adviser said, agreeing with Ogbaudu that the abduction's timing and location were unusually audacious.

Wednesday's attacks followed the abduction Tuesday of a Filipino employee of Netco Dietsmann who was seized from a company car heading for the airport in Owerri, the capital of Imo State.

The latest two incidents bring to 26 the number of Filipino nationals being held hostage in southern Nigeria. The other 24 were seized from a cargo vessel in Nigerian waters in January.

The past few weeks have seen

FIRST FEMALE/ A10

EZ2
23 25

SIX DIGIT
6 0 9 1 5 4

Mid-Day SUERTRES Evening
1 0 7 | 2 1 5
(All in exact order)

SUPERLOTTO 6/49
2 15 31 33 39 46
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WEATHER FORECAST

FORECAST: Northeastern Luzon will experience cloudy skies with scattered rainshowers. Visayas and Mindanao will be mostly cloudy with scattered rainshowers and thunderstorms. The rest of the country will be cloudy with isolated rainshowers or thunderstorms.

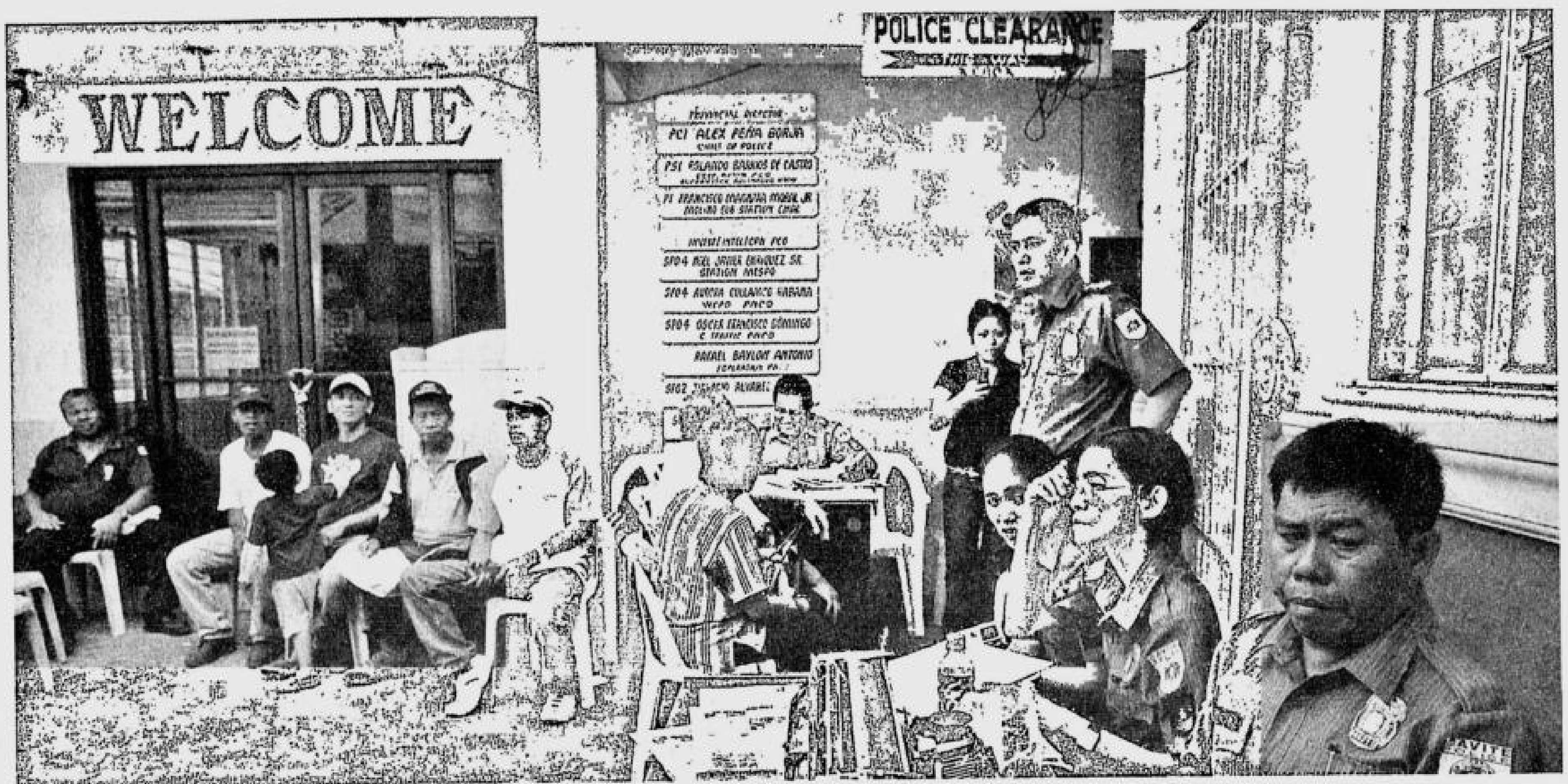
Metro Manila	Partly Cloudy	**Iloilo/Bacolod**	Cloudy with Rains
Baguio	Partly Cloudy	**Roxas**	Cloudy with Rains
Tuguegarao	Partly Cloudy	**Cebu**	Cloudy with Rains
Laoag	Partly Cloudy	**Tacloban**	Cloudy with Rains
Clark Zone	Partly Cloudy	**Gen. Santos**	Cloudy with Rains
Tagaytay	Partly Cloudy	**Zamboanga**	Cloudy with Rains
Legazpi	Partly Cloudy	**Cagayan de Oro**	Cloudy with Rains
Calapan	Partly Cloudy	**Davao**	Cloudy with Rains

COMPILED BY KATE PEDROSO, INQUIRER RESEARCH/02/08/07 SOURCE PAGASA

Cavite mayor in hot water

Sedition raps eyed vs exec for closing police station

By Alcuin Papa, Marlon Ramos, *Inquirer Southern Luzon* **and Norman Bordadora**



EVICTED. Policemen hold office outside the station in Bacoor, Cavite. The order to close down the station came from the mayor. EDWIN BACASMAS

THE PHILIPPINE NATIONAL Police is considering charging Mayor Jessie Castillo of Bacoor, Cavite with sedition for closing down the town's police station and seizing police vehicles and radios.

"The PNP Legal Service is now studying what we can do because it is against the law to prevent any officer from doing his or her function," PNP Spokesperson Chief Supt. Samuel Pagdilao told reporters yesterday.

Bacoor standoff

Pagdilao said the Revised Penal Code defined sedition as "preventing the national government, any of its offices or any of its officers to freely perform and administer its functions."

The Department of the Interior and Local Government also said yesterday "appropriate charges" would be filed against Castillo if an investigation of his actions so warranted.

Interior Undersecretary for Local Governance Wencelito Andanar told the INQUIRER that an investigation into the Bacoor standoff was being conducted despite Castillo's decision to reopen the police station.

Tension gripped Bacoor as members of the local police station were forced to hold office on the sidewalks for 20 hours after Castillo ordered their headquarters and about five other detachments padlocked on Wednesday night to protest what he said was an attempt of his political rival, Sen. Ramon "Bong" Revilla Jr., to replace the entire local police force.

Castillo, a known close ally of President Macapagal-Arroyo, had also recalled all two-way radios, police vehicles and other equipment that the municipal government "lent" to the police station.

Padlocked

In a memorandum, the mayor ordered the policemen to vacate the police station and return all the equipment that the municipality provided to them even as he instructed his men to close it down.

Aside from being the office of the 99-strong Bacoor police force, the bungalow building, located a few meters away from the municipal hall, also has a holding jail for arrested persons.

At around 6 p.m., the mayor's aides arrived at the police station and locked its main door using padlocks and chains. Some 200 supporters of the mayor trooped to the area in a show of support.

The stunned policemen heeded the order and took their things out of the building.

The police officers were eventually allowed to return and make use of the building at around 2 p.m. yesterday.

Castillo said his actions were prompted by the move of Revilla to replace his chief of police, Chief Insp. Alex Borja, along with other police personnel, to influence the conduct of the local elections in the area.

He claimed the plan was to control the police force in favor of the actor-politician's brother, Strike Revilla, who will run as mayor.

Revilla denied the allegations.

Castillo, now on his third and last term, is reportedly fielding his wife to succeed his post.

"They've done this to me in 2001 when the wife of then Gov. Bong Revilla (actress Lani Mercado) ran against me. They used the policemen to harass (my supporters)," Castillo said.

'We care, but ...'

Andanar did not specify the charges that could be leveled against Castillo. "I told him that we care for him because he made (President Arroyo) win in his area, but if he will not withdraw his barricades, we will throw the book at him," he said.

Charges, he said, might be filed against Castillo before the Ombudsman but unless his violation was related to the Anti-Graft Law, no sanctions would be implemented.

The Omnibus Election Code provides that sanctions on elective officials during the election period may not be meted out unless the charge is graft-related.

Pagdilao said PNP chief Dir. Gen. Oscar Calderon had ordered an investigation and sent Chief Supt. Nicasio Radovan, Region 4-A commander, to talk to Castillo.

He also said Bacoor Chief of Police Borja did not inform his superiors of the reason for the closure of the police station. Thus, Borja might also face administrative charges if found to have failed to report Castillo's order immediately to his superiors, Pagdilao said.

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PLEA BARGAIN

Atong Ang sticks to story on Erap

By Norman Bordadora

ANG

CHARLIE "ATONG" ANG WILL STICK TO HIS story that he delivered P130 million in tobacco excise taxes in 1998 to then President Joseph Estrada.

Ang's lawyers asked the Sandiganbayan to ignore Estrada's demand that Ang drop the admission he made in his plea bargain deal with the government in exchange for Estrada's acquiescence to the agreement.

Ang is a coaccused in the state's plunder case against Estrada.

In a manifestation filed before the Sandiganbayan on Wednesday, Ang's lawyers Ruth Castelo and Alfredo Villamor said Estrada's lawyer Rene Saguisag was appealing to the sympathy of the antigraft court's Special Division instead of coming up with the basis for rewording the deal the way Estrada wanted.

"(Saguisag's comment on the deal) was obviously appealing to the sympathy of this Honorable Court and opposing (the deal's) approval when it said: 'A new agreement should be prepared, as a matter of plain and simple justice,'" Castelo and Villamor said.

"It even contained a threat when it said in the supplemental comment that: 'Such admission must be expunged, along with the alleged conspiracy with President Erap, and Mr. Ang will yet be home free,'" they added.

Saguisag had said Estrada's lawyers would no longer question the plea bargain agreement if the document was reworded to say that Ang did not admit to the "predicate charges" in the information for plunder against him and Estrada.

He also asked that Ang's admission to conspiring with Estrada to take the P130 million in tobacco excise taxes from Ilocos Sur province be deleted as well.

In his comment to the plea bargain, Saguisag said Ang's admissions put Estrada in a bad light and should be deleted even if they may no longer be used against the former President in his plunder case which has been put to rest and is awaiting the Sandigan justices' verdict.

Saguisag argued the admissions will form part of judicial records and will be read by future students of the law.

"The initial apprehension that the plea bargain agreement is detrimental to coaccused Estrada, albeit baseless and unfounded, had already been addressed," Ang's lawyers said.

In open court, the Sandiganbayan justices and government prosecutors had said the admissions contained in the plea bargain agreement would not be used against Estrada unless Ang were subjected to a cross-examination.

There was no need to delete the clause in Ang's plea bargain, according to Villamor and Special Prosecutor Dennis Villa-Ignacio, since the information would not be used as evidence against Estrada.

As to Saguisag's demand that information that tended to put Estrada in a bad light be removed as the plea bargain agreement would be made part of court records that would be studied by law students, Villa-Ignacio said the document was no different from others presented against Estrada in his trial.

"The entire plunder trial will go down in the country's [judicial] records and it contains information against Mr. Estrada," he said.

Villamor, Ang's lawyer, had said that Ang's admission of conspiring with Estrada to "divert" the P130 million was the basis for his client's plea bargain agreement with the government.

Under the deal, Ang would plead guilty to the lesser crime of corrupting a public official in exchange for testifying in cases he had personal knowledge of and the repayment of the P25 million he took from the P130 million in tobacco taxes.

May polls also a battle for party-list control

By Michael Lim Ubac

THE BATTLE LINES FOR THE MAY polls are being drawn with the administration's aggressive and largely successful efforts to court the support of the country's marginalized sectors which comprise the party-list system in Congress.

Party-list lawmakers yesterday admitted that the midterm elections were not just a battle for local and national elective posts, but also for control of the party-list bloc in the House of Representatives.

To counter this move, leftist groups Partido ng Manggagawa, Anakpawis, Bayan Muna, Gabriela and Akbayan are seeking at least three seats each.

Speaker Jose de Venecia himself disclosed that the administration's quiet but persistent courting of party-list groups was now in full blast.

The Speaker announced late Wednesday that Lakas-CMD had already signed an alliance with seven party-list organizations representing 14 million voters.

The party-list groups that signed the "Covenant of Common Purpose and United Action" were the Association of Philippine Electric Cooperatives, Butil Farmers Party, Alliance of Volunteer Educators, Veterans Freedom Party, Coop-National Confederation of Cooperatives, Ang Laban ng Indigenong Filipino and Alagad.

He said the list was later increased to 11 but did not elaborate.

De Venecia said the groups pledged to "lend mutual support" to each party in order to "ensure collective victory" for their candidates in the May elections.

"They also agreed to create a coordinating committee to build mechanism for mutual support for their political and legislative advocacies," he said.

"With a combined membership of 14 million, the seven party-list groups have a known voting strength of seven million, making the new alliance a formidable force at the local and national levels in the May 14 elections," said the Speaker.

This marked the third time in two weeks that Lakas had "either gained new members or forged new alliances in "a sustained campaign to advance the party's "wide-ranging reform agenda," he said.

In the biggest coup so far this year, 12 governors took their oath two weeks ago as new Lakas members before De Venecia, adding muscle to the party's machinery and giving Lakas control of majority of the country's provinces.

"Overall, we remain committed to centrist politics, free market, free press and free elections, the ideals of Christian-Muslim ideology and democracy, and the environmental requirements of our dear Planet Earth," said De Venecia.

The opposition-leaning militant groups Bayan Muna, Gabriela and Anakpawis, which currently hold six seats, are looking at 9 to 15 seats in the next 14th Congress, and three each for Akbayan and Partido Manggagawa.

The Partido ng Manggagawa filed its manifestation to run in the coming May elections yesterday at the Commission on Elections.

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Cops acting as politicians' bodyguards to be arrested

THE PHILIPPINE NATIONAL POLICE (PNP) leadership warned yesterday that it would arrest and jail any policeman caught serving as private bodyguard of any politician seeking public office in the May elections.

PNP Chief Director General Oscar Calderon yesterday ordered the PNP Intelligence Group to "identify, validate and neutralize the illegal acts of some policemen acting as personal security and bodyguards of politicians."

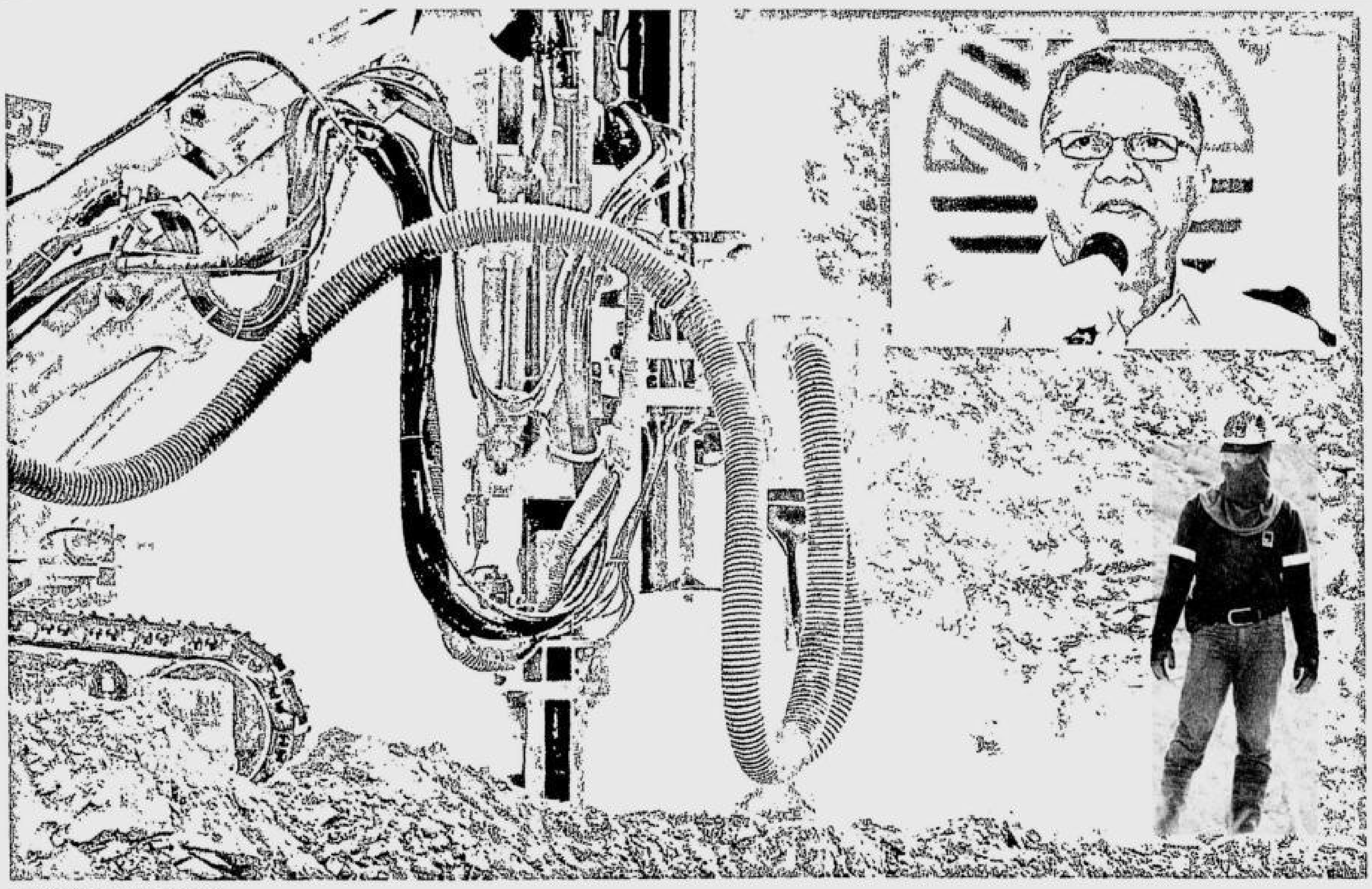
"The PNP is a professional organization and it will not allow its members to be used in partisan politics," Calderon said.

He also ordered the PNP IG to monitor security agencies owned by politicians and prevent them from acting as the "private armies" of any candidate.

Calderon said the PNP will prevent any employee of security agencies to intimidate, coerce, and harass anyone to influence the result of the election.

The PNP Chief reminded all regional commanders to make sure their policemen follow the PNP's guidelines on the elections. Regional commanders are heads of their respective regional Task Force HOPE (Honest, Orderly and Peaceful Elections) units.

The PNP has been given sole responsibility by the Commission on Elections to secure the coming elections.



BACK IN HARNESS

A miner watches as a giant drill breaks up stone in the pit of the Lafayette mine on Rapu-Rapu island in Albay. Environment Secretary Angelo Reyes (inset) ordered yesterday the reopening of the mine following months of suspension caused by two cyanide spills. *(See story on Page B6)* REUTERS/RAFFY LERMA

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House adopts Senate version of antiterrorism bill in bicam

By TJ Burgonio

THE GOVERNMENT YESTERDAY MOVED A step closer to enacting the antiterror bill into law after the House of Representatives adopted en toto the Senate version, which carried more safeguards against possible abuse by law enforcers.

More than an hour after convening the bicameral conference committee, the House panel led by Rep. Simeon Datumanong agreed to adopt Senate Bill No. 2137, a move that pleased its Senate counterparts chaired by Sen. Juan Ponce Enrile.

The senators last night ratified the bicameral committee report on the agreement. But the House failed to do the same last night for lack of quorum.

Senate President Manuel Villar Jr. hailed the House decision to adopt the Senate version, which he said was thoroughly reviewed.

"At the same time, while we need an antiterrorism law, this should be balanced with the need to protect the rights of the people," he told reporters.

"I can live with it. Finally, terrorism is a crime in this country," Undersecretary Ricardo Blancaflor of the Anti-Terror Task Force said on ANC.

Senate Minority Leader Aquilino Pimentel Jr., who introduced a raft of amendments, said the good thing about it was that the bill, if enacted into law, would be enforced after the May 14 elections, and that it would be subjected to periodic review.

Both the Senate and the House versions prescribe life imprisonment for convicted terrorists, three days of detention of suspects without an arrest warrant or formal charges, and the proscription of terror organizations, among other salient features.

But the Senate bill carried more safeguards, like imposing a penalty on law enforcers who violate the rights of a suspect and prescribing a P500,000 per day compensation for every day of detention to any person wrongfully detained, according to Datumanong.

It also contained a definition of terrorism, and specified the acts of terrorism covered, he said.

"While the House version is a very good bill, there are additional safeguards introduced in the Senate version, that's why we accepted it en toto," Datumanong said.

The compensation for wrongful detention was "a very good safeguard because any arresting officer would think many times [before arresting and detaining a suspect] because of the possibility of answering for that kind of amount," he said.

Bayan Muna party-list Rep. Satur Ocampo said he agreed with the Senate version but reiterated that the law was not necessary now.

"We take the position that the law is not necessary because there are existing laws... and particularly there's always this danger of it being abused," he said.

Enrile, sponsor of the measure, said the bill carried a lot of safeguards against the abuse of human rights and would make "it easier for enforcers" to operate against terror groups in the country.

Under the bill, terrorism is defined as an act punishable under the Revised Penal Code and under other laws "with the condition of sowing and creating a condition of widespread and extraordinary fear and panic among the populace to coerce the government to yield to an unlawful demand."

The bill's other salient features were that the surveillance, interception and recording of communications would require authorization from a division of the Court of Appeals upon application by a law enforcer authorized by the Anti-Terrorism Council.

The measure forbids the surveillance of communications between lawyers and their clients, doctors and their patients, journalists and their sources, and penalizes a law enforcer for unauthorized interceptions or recordings.

Under the bill, a person under detention shall be allowed to communicate freely with his lawyers at any time and with his family, and to avail of the services of a doctor. There will be no torture or coercion in the investigation and interrogation of detained suspects.

The US Embassy yesterday welcomed the approval of the bill, saying it was a "step forward" in the global war on terror.

"In general, it's important that law enforcement authorities have the right legal tools to fight terrorism," said embassy spokesperson Matthew Lussenhop who declined to comment on specific provisions.

But Philippine National Police Chief Oscar Calderon said the antiterror bill passed by the Senate would still need "modification" as it was "lacking in few aspects to become effective."

Still, the Senate approval was a big boost to the campaign against terror, said Calderon, who spoke to reporters while on a visit to the Autonomous Region in Muslim Mindanao (ARMM) in Shariff Kabunsuan.

"I am also glad that there are safeguards in place in the bill to ensure that terror suspects are not abused by arresting officers of the law," he said.

But the Bagong Alyansang Makabayan-Southern Mindanao maintained that the bill, even in the watered-down Senate version, remained vague and broad.

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BusinessWorld

Defense chief says no to ROTC election duties

By Dona Pazzibugan

DEFENSE SECRETARY HERMOGENES EBDANE Jr. yesterday shot down the Commission on Elections' plan to mobilize Reserve Officers Training Corps (ROTC) cadets for the May elections.

Ebdane said the plan went against an Oct. 12 memorandum of agreement (MOA) signed between the Comelec and the Department of National Defense that exempted soldiers from poll duties.

Earlier this week, Comelec Chair Benjamin Abalos said the poll body might deploy ROTC cadets to man election precincts to make up for an expected shortage of 200,000 election inspectors.

Armed Forces of the Philippines records say there are around 150,000 ROTC cadets, or college students who are voluntarily taking up the two-year ROTC course.

"We have a problem with (deploying) the ROTC," Ebdane told reporters yesterday. "As of now it's covered by the (prohibitions in the) MOA, so as I see it, there seems to be a problem. We may not use the ROTC (cadets)."

He said ROTC cadets could not be deployed without the supervision of active duty military personnel, and the MOA barred soldiers from election duty.

"When you deploy the ROTC, you need some military supervisors and this is prohibited (under the MOA), so the Comelec may have a problem with that," Ebdane said.

Under the MOA initiated by former Defense Secretary Avelino Cruz Jr., the Comelec can no longer tap the military to provide security to candidates and Comelec personnel as well as protect polling places and members of the Board of Election Inspectors.

Troops can also no longer be tapped for counting and canvassing votes, clustering polling precincts and transporting ballots and election materials.

Subject to the approval of the AFP Chief of Staff, troops can only escort vehicles transporting election materials when police personnel cannot adequately address a security threat.

McDo wins case on 'golden arches' logo

By Leila B. Salaverria

INTERNATIONAL FAST-FOOD GIANT McDonald's Corp. must be jumping for joy.

The Supreme Court has reversed a Court of Appeals ruling that had allowed MacJoy Fastfood Corp. of Cebu to register "MacJoy & Device" with the Intellectual Property Office (IPO).

The "golden arches" may now be exclusively used by the American company, in the Philippines at least.

The high court said the McDonald's and MacJoy trademarks were similar enough to create confusion, pointing out that both offered fast food.

MacJoy sells fried chicken, chicken barbecue, hamburgers, french fries, spaghetti, steaks and sandwiches, among other foods, while McDonald's offers several of the same items, most of which have "Mc" or "Mac" attached to their names, like Big Mac, McSpaghetti and McChicken.

"Applying the dominancy test to the instant case, the Court finds herein petitioner's 'McDonald's' and respondent's 'MacJoy' marks confusingly similar with each other such that an ordinary purchaser can conclude an association or relation between the marks," said the high court in its Feb. 2, 2007, decision.

The tribunal said the MacJoy Corporation also sought to ride on the popularity of the McDonald's name, a fast food franchise that originated in the United States.

Implausible and insufficient

It said the Filipino company's explanation for choosing the name MacJoy out of the many others it could have used was "implausible and insufficient."

"The only logical conclusion deducible therefrom is that the respondent would want to ride high on the established reputation and goodwill of the McDonald's marks, which, as applied to petitioner's restaurant business and food products, is undoubtedly beyond question," the high court said.

MacJoy sought to register the "MacJoy & Device" trademark in 1991 with the IPO, but McDonald's opposed this, saying it would make it appear MacJoy's was affiliated with it.

The local company had contended it had been using "MacJoy" for many years and in good faith, and even before McDonald's opened an outlet in Cebu in 1992.

Difference in design

MacJoy also said its trademark could not be confused with McDonald's because of the differences in design and detail.

But the IPO agreed with McDonald's.

MacJoy elevated the case to the Court of Appeals, which ruled in its favor and reversed the IPO ruling, saying there were no confusing similarities in the McDonald's and MacJoy trademarks.

In reversing the appellate court's decision and upholding the IPO, the Supreme Court said the dominancy test, instead of the holistic test, should have been used to determine whether or not the two trademarks would be confused with each other.

The dominancy test focuses on the similarities of competing trademarks, while the holistic test considers the entirety of the trademarks.

In this case, the high court said the dominancy test was more suitable.

It said both trademarks used the prefixes "Mc" and "Mac" and the "M" logo that appeared similar in their arch-like design.

The court added it was the prefix "Mc" that caught the attention of consumers.

"Verily, the word 'MacJoy' attracts attention the same way as 'McDonalds, MacFries, McSpaghetti, McDo, Big Mac' and the rest of the McDonald's marks," it said.

The court also said the McDonald's trademark was registered first and the American corporation had established ownership of it.

Globe: No legal basis for 'unlimited text' rollback

GLOBE TELECOM HAS AGAIN REJECTED calls for it to roll back its unlimited texting rates, saying there was "no legal basis" to revert to pre-Feb. 1 prices.

Responding to an order from the National Telecommunications Commission directing it to stop implementing its new "Unlitxt" promo and and revert back to its previous "Unlimitxt" service, Globe argued that the two promos were unrelated.

In a letter to the NTC yesterday, it said its previous Unlimitxt promotion was withdrawn from the market last Jan. 31 with the approval of the NTC, and that the new rates that were implemented on Feb. 1 had also been approved by the commission.

It also said the NTC could not suspend the new Unlitxt promotion as it would violate Globe's contracts with those who have subscribed to the new promo.

"In determining whether a promotional rate for text is a price increase or not, the rates should be compared against the approved rate of P1 per text, and not against the rates of the promotion that immediately preceded it. Otherwise, no carrier could ever implement a promotion that was different from the one that came before it, and this would deprive consumers of freedom of choice," Globe said in its letter.

'Price hike'

On Feb. 1, Globe introduced a four-day unlimited text promo costing P80, which cost P30 more than its previous five-day P50 Unlimitxt.

The TXTPower consumer group complained to the NTC, saying the new rates constituted a price hike and that Globe had gone back on its promise that the Unlimitxt rates would be permanent.

The NTC ordered Globe last Feb. 5 to suspend its new promotion and reinstate its previous Unlimitxt service, pending a public hearing.

After running some tests the next day, the NTC found that Globe had still not restored the old Unlimitxt service as ordered.

Globe senior vice president Rodolfo Salalima said on the same day that Globe would not suspend its new unlimited text service because of "legal constraints."

On Feb. 7, the NTC issued an en banc order for Globe to immediately "cease and desist" from selling its new unlimited text promo and "show cause in writing within 15 days" why it should not be sanctioned for refusing to restore the previous unlimited text promo.

The NTC will hear the arguments of Globe and TXTPower at a hearing today.

Riza T. Olchondra

THE DAILY GOSPEL

Friday, February 9, 2007
5th Week in Ordinary Time

1st Reading: Gen 3:1-8
Gospel: Mark 7:31-37

Again Jesus set out; from the country of Tyre, passed through Sidon and, skirting the sea of Galilee, he came to the territory of Decapolis. There a deaf man who also had difficulty in speaking was brought to him. They asked Jesus to lay his hand upon him.

Jesus took him apart from the crowd, put his fingers into the man's ears and touched his tongue with spittle. Then, looking up to heaven, he groaned and said to him, "Ephphetha," that is, "Be opened."

And his ears were opened, his tongue was loosened, and he began to speak clearly. Jesus ordered them not to tell anyone, but the more he insisted on this, the more they proclaimed it. The people were completely astonished and said, "He has done all things well; he makes the deaf hear and the dumb speak."

Commentary

We read the story of the serpent that lies to Eve who eats the fruit. Eve eats because she sees it as good for food and for gaining wisdom. She shares it with Adam and they both see and know. And upon knowing their own self-consciousness, they also know what is good and what is evil. They hide themselves from God, knowing they have disobeyed his word.

A deaf man who also has a speech impediment is brought by others to Jesus. He takes the man aside to heal him, putting his fingers into the man's ears and touching his tongue. Jesus cries out and groans, and then the man's ears are opened and his tongue freed. Then Jesus tells them not to tell anyone. But of course they do. This is a piece of a baptismal story and the preparation for it: someone being brought to Jesus, who touches him and speaks on his behalf, commanding him to be whole and setting him free, giving him back into the care of the community to help him speak and hear the Word. This is what we are to do for others—this is wisdom.

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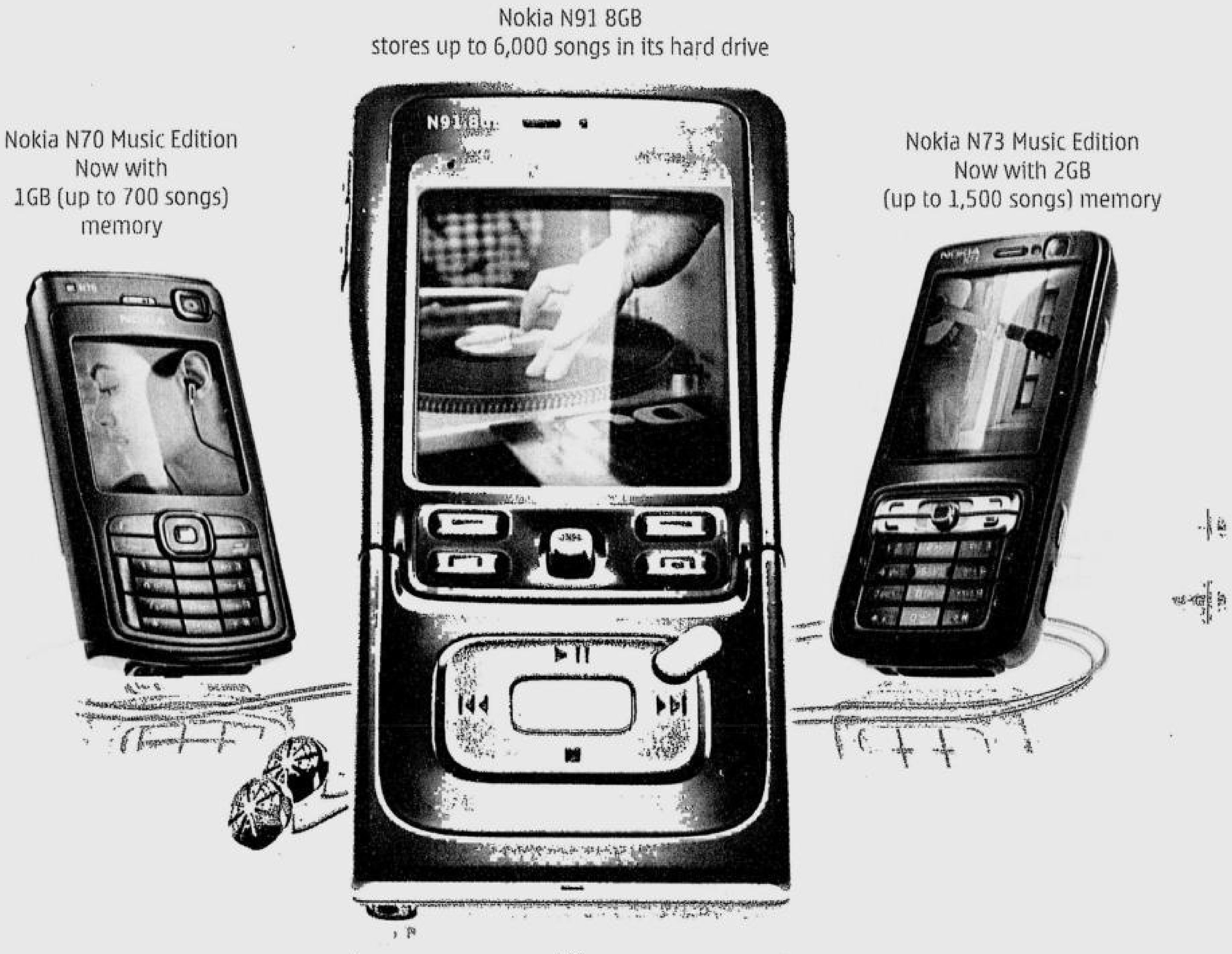

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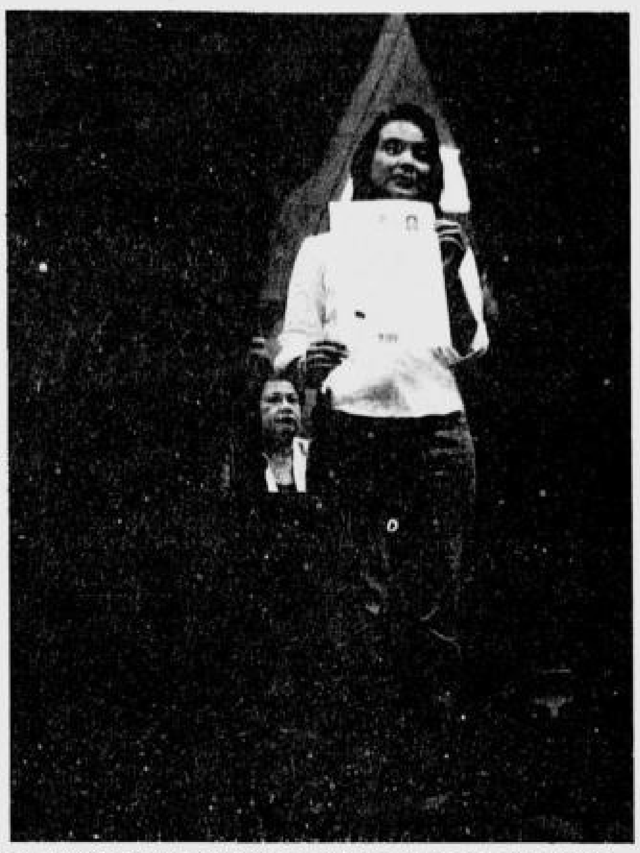
EDWIN BACASMAS

TOP FORM: Nikki Coseteng emerges from the Comelec in campaign mode after filing her certificate of candidacy for senator. She's running as an independent and hoping for a slot as a guest candidate on the UNO ticket.

IN THE COMPANY OF HIS PEERS, aspiring senator Noynoy Aquino (center) is cheered on by, from left, Senators Mar Roxas, Franklin Drilon, Rodolfo Biazon and Alfredo Lim. EDWIN BACASMAS



SURVEY TOPNOTCHER Loren Legarda goes through the motions of filing her candidacy even if she says she knows that by doing so it would mean the dismissal of her protest pending at the Supreme Court. EDWIN BACASMAS

JV out of UNO ticket; Sonia Roco in

From page A1

asked not to be named for lack of authority to speak on the issue, said the inclusion of Sonia Roco in the UNO ticket would give the opposition a broader base.

Estrada said the pullout of Ejercito was a painful decision but one that he had to make to ensure the unity of the opposition and to include more anti-Arroyo forces in its fold.

"This is to dismiss the idea that the coming elections are a proxy fight between [myself] and [President Macapagal-Arroyó], as many of Malacañang's spin doctors want to project," Estrada told the INQUIRER by phone from his vacation estate in Tanay, Rizal, where he is under house arrest.

Estrada said his son had "one more turn at the mayoralty" in San Juan.

"The people love him there. The businessmen, the masses—they all do," said the ex-President.

He said it had hurt him as a father to have to tell Ejercito was out of the UNO senatorial slate, especially since the latter had improved in the survey rankings and entered the top 10 in the latest Pulse Asia poll.

Estrada said he did not see the May elections as a proxy war but "an opportunity for the people to let their sentiments against Ms Arroyo be known."

"Through the years, she has fared dismally in the surveys," he said of his successor in Malacañang.

He also said that if it were a battle between himself and the incumbent, he would prefer that she call a "snap" election.

"I'd file my candidacy against her. I'd stay here [in Tanay]; she can go and campaign. Let's see who will win," he said.

'Dynastyism'

Estrada likewise said that his decision to pull his son out of the senatorial race was not in response to former UNO stalwart Francisco Tatad's protest against the "dynastyism" exemplified by Ejercito's candidacy and those of Taguig-Pateros Rep. Alan Peter Cayetano (son of the late Sen. Rene Cayetano and sister of Sen. Pia Cayetano) and lawyer Aquilino "Koko" Pimentel III (son and namesake of the incumbent Senate minority leader).

The terms of Pia Cayetano and the elder Pimentel will expire in 2010, as will that of Sen. Jinggoy Estrada, the deposed President's eldest son and Ejercito's half-brother.

"There's no law against political dynasties," Estrada declared.

He said the aversion to kin of incumbent officials running for office should be limited to the highest official of the land because she had immense influence and resources at her command to have members of her family win elections.

"Already, [Ms Arroyo] has a dynasty. One of her sons is a congressman (Pampanga Rep. Juan Miguel Arroyo). Her son Dato is running for a seat in Bicol. Her brother-in-law (Negros Occ. Rep. Ignacio Arroyo) is also a congressman. They already have a dynasty," Estrada said, adding:

"In my case, it would have been just two of my sons in the Senate [if Ejercito did run and win]."

ESTRADA: It was a hard decision, hard to convince JV.

Referendum

However, he said, pulling his son out of the senatorial race did not mean that Alan Peter Cayetano and Koko Pimentel—both in the UNO slate—should also do the same.

"The political dynasty issue is a false issue," he said.

Four opposition politicians led by former Sen. Loren Legarda and Tarlac Rep. Benigno "Noynoy" Aquino III yesterday filed their candidacies for senator at the Commission on Elections.

Aquino, only son of former President Corazon Aquino, said the May elections would be a referendum on the Arroyo administration, and appealed to voters to make the right decisions.

"Are we going for a stronger and stronger central government that is totalitarian and does not tolerate democratic space, or do we go fuller and fuller into democracy?" he said.

Aquino called on voters to help him fight the country's purported slide into a dictatorship, saying "what we're having now is disrespect for our laws, the decisions of only one person and one group, and the consistent attack on our democratic institutions."

He said only the Senate and the Supreme Court had remained steadfast against the attacks on Philippine democracy. He ruled out running under the administration party and said the country had fared better during the Estrada administration, when there was "more democratic space."

Trademark yellow

Aquino, who was celebrating his 47th birthday, was accompanied by his mother, his sister Kris, and Kris' husband James Yap—all wearing yellow.

The former President said she was praying for her son and the coming elections.

She compared her son to his father, the murdered former Sen. Benigno "Ninoy" Aquino Jr., saying both loved their country, were firm in their convictions, and placed national interest before personal interest.

With the Aquino entourage were Senators Franklin Drilon, Rodolfo Biazon and Alfredo Lim, as well as Chito Gascon, a former education undersecretary, and Teresita Quintos-Deles, Ms Arroyo's former adviser on the peace process

Dismissal of protest

Legarda, who is running under the Nationalist People's Coalition (NPC), said she had accepted the fact that her filing of her candidacy would mean the dismissal of her protest contesting the result of the 2004 vice presidential election pending at the Supreme Court sitting as the Presidential Electoral Tribunal (PET).

"After P12 million and three years we have not even finished one province, and I don't think we can finish it after 2010 because of my opponent's delaying tactics," she told reporters in reference to Vice President Noli de Castro.

Legarda said, however, that her lawyers were able to uncover purportedly fake election returns, particularly in Lanao del Sur.

"In a way, this is my legacy to the Filipino people who now have seen the truth that this [cheating] was part of the bigger picture in the 2004 elections," she said. "It's not a matter of giving up; it's a matter of being realistic."

De Castro told the INQUIRER that Legarda's "abandonment" of her election protest had deprived him of the chance to clear his name from her allegation that he had cheated his way to the second top post in the land.

"I now have a problem because how can I prove that I did not cheat?" he said. "She knows that I did not cheat. She should continue her protest."

It was to have been De Castro's turn to present evidence to refute the presentation of cheating and fraud by Legarda's lawyers at the PET.

Nothing to hide

Asked if her political image was being affected by the murder case involving her estranged husband, former Batangas Gov. Antonio Leviste, Legarda said: "My personal life has been an open book and I have nothing to hide and nothing to be ashamed of. Everyone carries a cross and despite my imperfect life, I offer my services to the Filipino people." *(See story on Page A1.)*

Legarda, who is running under the NPC's "opposition wing," was accompanied to the Comelec by her lawyer Sixto Brillantes, movie producer Lily Monteverde and former senator and ex-diplomat Leticia Ramos-Shahani.

Anna Dominique "Nikki" Coseteng and John Osmeña, both former senators, also filed their certificates of candidacy.

Osmeña is running under UNO. Coseteng said she will run as an independent although she hoped to be tapped as UNO guest candidate.

Osmeña was the last to file his certificate of candidacy yesterday, bringing to 37 the number of persons now running for senator.

Gabriela, An Waray and Partido ng Manggagawa—party-list groups seeking seats in the House of Representatives--also filed their manifestations to participate in the May elections. *With a report from Cynthia D. Balana and Michael Lim Ubac*

It's Friday, Wednesday Group still out

From page A1

They were to have met Wednesday night but the meeting fell through because deliberations on key legislation lasted until the wee hours of Thursday morning.

Today's the day

Villar, Recto and Pangilinan said they would come to a decision last night and make their announcement today.

De Venecia disclosed on Wednesday that Recto and Arroyo were among the administration's nine senatorial aspirants. Both ran and won under the administration coalition in the 2001 senatorial election.

Villar had earlier declared he would run under the United Opposition (UNO) or a third force. Recto and Pangilinan, on the other hand, indicated that they might run as independent candidates.

A source said Recto could also choose to join the administration's Team Unity.

Yesterday, Villar again raised the possibility that he and his colleagues might take different paths during the May 14 elections.

"It's possible that we'll go our separate ways; it's possible that we'll stick together. But we'll remain friends," he told reporters.

Kinks in the talks between UNO and the Wednesday Group emerged last weekend when Pangilinan disclosed that UNO leaders had issued an ultimatum for the group to make its decision.

UNO leaders named eight of the opposition's 12 candidates last week, but were quick to say that the four remaining slots were reserved for the Wednesday Group.

Complete ticket

On the other side of the fence, Surigao del Sur Rep. Prospero Pichay Jr. said the ruling coalition would formally announce on Saturday its Team Unity ticket for the senatorial race.

The administration stalwart told the INQUIRER that a complete 12-member ticket would be announced, in effect squelching speculation that with the Wednesday Group still holding out, Malacañang would be hard put to fill up the slots.

"We will have a formidable slate—a complete one to trounce the much-hyped candidates of the opposition," declared Pichay, who is preparing to announce his senatorial candidacy today in Quezon City.

Pichay did not divulge the names of the candidates who would make it to the Team Unity ticket, but said "there should be one from the Muslim community."

He also said UNO should not be overconfident even after the latest survey showed that the majority of its candidates led by former Sen. Loren Legarda would win if the elections were held today.

I man down

Rep. Antonio Cuenco of Cebu City and Rep. Edwin Uy of Isabela, both administration congressmen, echoed Pichay, saying UNO should not presume it would win the elections despite the survey results. They said the administration machinery was in place to ensure the victory of its own candidates.

But even before Malacañang could complete its slate, one administration stalwart, Tarlac Rep. Gilbert Teodoro, has bowed out.

In a statement issued yesterday, Teodoro, a nephew of businessman Eduardo "Danding" Cojuangco, said the time was not ripe for him to seek a Senate seat although he had been assured of a slot in the ticket early on.

"After much thought, prayer and reflection, I have decided not to run for the Senate. This is a difficult decision amid the numerous expressions of support I received," he said.

Teodoro said that being in the Senate, "considering the difficulties and expense of winning, may weaken my resolve to push for genuine constitutional reform."

He said he could do better in another capacity, particularly in his advocacy for the shift to a parliamentary form of government, to "engender political stability and sustained, continuing economic development."

Pichay is assured of a slot in the Team Unity slate, and his party mate and political rival, Surigao del Norte Rep. Robert Ace Barbers, is not far behind.

With Teodoro out, Barbers is being endorsed for inclusion by Lakas officials and members from Mindanao.

Bukidnon Rep. Juan Miguel Zubiri, who filed his own certificate of candidacy after being endorsed by Ms Arroyo and Speaker Jose de Venecia, confirmed that Barbers was being considered by the ruling coalition.

Barbers had said in an earlier interview that he was considering seeking the Senate seat formerly occupied by his father, the late Sen. Robert Barbers.

Congressman tops Senate mock polls; Villar No. 7

By TJ Burgonio

IN HIS OWN TURF, SENATE President Manuel Villar Jr. is not the top choice for senator.

A "mock election" conducted on Wednesday by Senate employees and legislative staff, had Villar landing seventh among 28 senatorial aspirants, behind two rising lawmakers from the House of Representatives and some of his colleagues.

Villar, who leads the pack of senators seeking reelection, obtained 338 votes in the mock poll that was initiated by the Senate employees group Senado and that involved more than 700 voters—nearly half of the total voting population in the chamber.

"I guess it's because only half of the voting population turned out," Senado president Perla Mayor said in explaining Villar's considerably low ranking.

"But make no mistake, we love him," said Mayor, the supervisory legislative officer at the Senate debate section.

Some 736 employees and staff members trooped to the Padilla Room on Wednesday morning to vote. The list of 28 senatorial aspirants was drawn up by Senado based on newspaper reports.

The votes were counted on the same day, but the results were released to the media only yesterday.

The low turnout, which constituted only half of the 1,600 voters, was attributed to the short notice and the busy schedule in the chamber, which rushed the passage of a number of bills in the runup to its adjournment this week.

Sorsogon Rep. Francis Escudero topped the election with 535 votes, followed by Sen. Panfilo Lacson with 424, and Taguig Rep. Alan Peter Cayetano with 374.

Trailing them were Senators Ralph Recto (365), Joker Arroyo (346) and Majority Leader Francis Pangilinan (343).

Asked to explain the employees' apparent high vote of confidence in Escudero and Pangilinan, Mayor said: "I think they have charisma and are principled. They're a new breed of politicians."

Rounding out the "winning circle" were former Sen. Gregorio Honasan (337), Sen. Edgardo Angara (324), Aquilino Pimentel III (298), former Sen. Loren Legarda (297) and Tarlac Rep. Benigno "Noynoy" Aquino III (281).

Next in line were former Sen. Vicente Sotto, Antonio Trillanes, former Senators John Osmeña and Nikki Coseteng, Perfecto Yasay Jr., President Macapagal-Arroyo's Chief of Staff Michael Defensor, Rep. Miguel Zubiri, former Sen. Tessie Aquino-Oreta, San Juan Mayor JV Ejercito, Sen. Luisa Ejercito, Rep. Prospero Pichay, and Ilocos Sur Gov. Luis "Chavit" Singson.

Those at the bottom of the heap were actor Richard Gomez (28) and actor Edu Manzano, who garnered one vote along with Sonia Roco and former Sen. Francisco Tatad.

"That means we're intelligent," Mayor said, when asked to comment on the low votes for the actors.

SC tells Bro. Mike to pay bank P2.5M

By Leila B. Salaverria

THE SUPREME COURT HAS ORDERED EL Shaddai leader Mariano "Mike" Velarde to pay the P1-million loan he obtained from a savings bank in 1983, plus more than P1.5 million in interest the loan had accumulated.

The tribunal, in a Feb. 5 resolution, partly granted Velarde's appeal of the court's 2004 decision on the same case. The court had ordered Velarde to pay more than P15 million to the Permanent Savings and Loan Bank.

The high court maintained that Velarde would still have to pay the loan he obtained from the bank, but reduced the amount that he would have to give.

It said the initially prescribed interest rate of 25 percent, plus the 24-percent penalty charge per annum until the amount was paid, and the 25 percent attorney's fees the bank had demanded were too much.

"Equity dictates that we review the amount of the award, considering the excessive interest rate and the too onerous penalty, and, consequently, the resulting excessive attorney's fees," the SC said.

It thus ruled that Velarde should just pay the principal amount of P1 million, more than P1.5 million in interest, 12 percent legal interest per year until the amount was paid, and P50,000 in attorney's fees.

The high court said it would be inequitable to penalize Velarde with huge interest payments considering the final resolution of his case had dragged on for several years because Permanent Savings and Loan Bank had interposed appeals, which resulted in the escalation of Velarde's obligation to more than 15 times the principal amount.

The high court also said Velarde could not be faulted for not settling the loan earlier because both the Court of Appeals and the Manila Regional Trial Court ruled that the Permanent Savings and Loan Bank failed to prove the existence of the loan.

But while it reduced the amount of Velarde's obligation, the high court denied Velarde's plea to stop him from paying the loan, saying he had raised no substantial arguments.

J. de los Reyes; 91

JACINTO "PACHING" DE LOS REYES, OF CUYO, Palawan, died on Tuesday at the age of 91.

His body now lies at the Premier Chapel of the Holy Trinity Memorial Chapels on Sucat Road, Parañaque City.

He is survived by his wife Felicing, children Joseling and Mila, Father Jess, Junnie and Cheding, Titing and Luding, Father Joel, Jimmy and Neneng, Vieve and Winston and grandchildren and great grandchildren.

Burial will be on Sunday at Manila Memorial Park in Parañaque after a Mass at 1 p.m.

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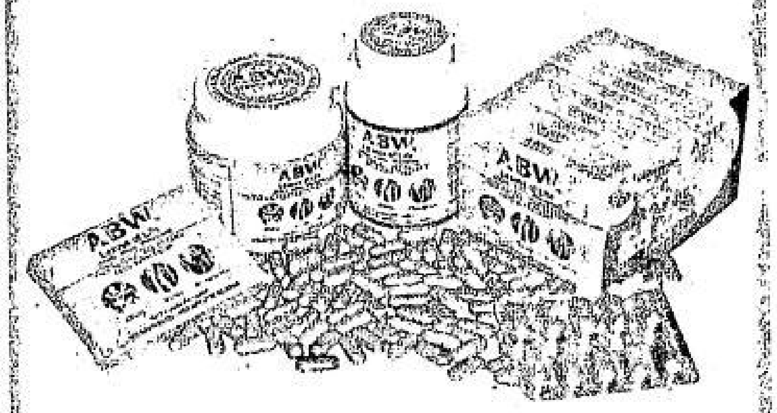

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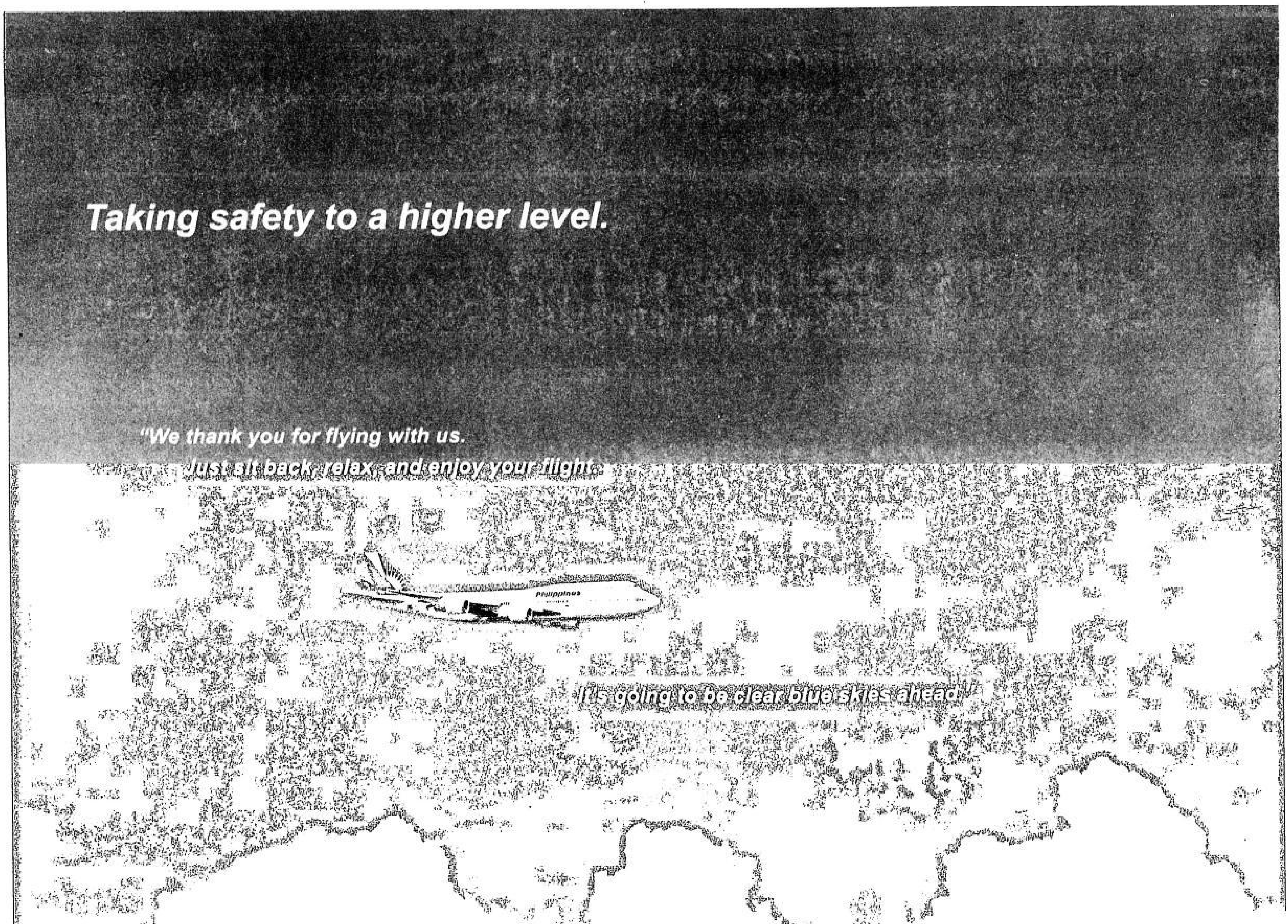
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Andrew Drysdale, Regional Vice President - Asia Pacific
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Prosecution, defense panels gird for battle

NOW THAT FORMER BATANGAS Gov. Antonio "Tony" Leviste is in jail, prosecutors pursuing a murder case against him have begun preparing for trial, strengthening a case that the defense has branded as "baseless."

The panel of private and public prosecutors said yesterday that they had taken steps to build up a solid case that would keep the businessman in jail for the fatal shooting of his executive assistant, Rafael de las Alas, on Jan. 12.

"We have already proven probable cause (for murder). Now, we have to prove it beyond reasonable doubt. Hopefully, considering the evidence that we have, we are confident that Leviste will be held liable for what we believe is murder," said Joven Lorenzo, lawyer of the victim's family.

Senior State Prosecutor Emmanuel Velasco, who moved to upgrade the criminal case against Leviste from homicide to murder, said the prosecution would study the case well before proceeding to trial.

"We will go over the records a hundred times, as we did in other cases we handled. There is strong evidence for murder against Leviste," he said.

Tarra Quismundo

Salceda appointed Palace chief of staff

From page A1

He will replace Michael Defensor who is expected to hand in his resignation today to run for senator in the May elections.

"I am just going back to my first love of complete staff work. Since my contract finishes in June, just like any ordinary jobseeker I applied for work today," said Salceda, the congressman from Albay whose term limit is up this year and will not be eligible to run again.

Salceda, who is an economic adviser to Ms Arroyo, met yesterday with the President who asked him to write down his job description on top of the regular duties of a chief of staff.

Salceda said his main goals as chief of staff would be to work for the condonation of agrarian reform liabilities; universal access to tertiary education especially through pre-need and tuition financing; enhancement of comprehensive and compulsory health insurance; promotion of a competition policy, especially in the power sector; promotion of the super-region investment and financing strategy; and rehabilitation of his disaster-stricken province.

Although Salceda is expected to start in his new job by Monday, Press Secretary Ignacio Bunye said the President had allowed him more time to deal with unfinished business as chair of the House appropriations committee, which takes charge of the yearly budget process.

Salceda, a member of the President's Kampi Party, was the President's student at the Ateneo de Manila University where Ms Arroyo was an economics professor. One other Cabinet member, Agriculture Secretary Arthur Yap, was also an Ateneo student of Ms Arroyo.

Hotshot market analyst

Before becoming a legislator, Salceda was a hotshot stock market analyst, voted by foreign fund managers in Asiamoney's annual survey as Asia's "Best Analyst" in 1995 and "Best Economist" for four consecutive years from 1993 to 1996. He was research director for the Philippine units of the ING Barings and SBC Warburg securities firms.

Salceda, who obtained a management engineering degree, cum laude, at the Ateneo de Manila University, and got his master's degree in business management, with distinction, from the Asian Institute of Management, also served as a research intern with the late Speaker Ramon Mitra and chief of staff in the congressional office of the late Raul Roco.

LEVISTE stays in jail as his petition for a TRO to stop the Department of Justice from continuing to hear his case has been denied by the Court of Appeals. INQUIRER PHOTO

First day in the life of prisoner No. 517

From page A1

without his family watching," Toni said.

On the verge of tears, she later said in a trembling voice: "My dad is a very strong man. He's a fighter. He can handle conditions there. It would break his heart (if we) see him. But all I want to know is that he is OK, though I am heeding his request."

Leviste was jailed on Wednesday night on orders of Makati Judge Elmo Alameda, who approved earlier in the day the justice department's recommendation to upgrade to murder from homicide the charge filed against him for De las Alas' death on Jan. 12.

Senior State Prosecutor Emmanuel Velasco had moved for the upgrading of the charge based on results of a reinvestigation, done upon the request of the victim's family.

Treachery

The prosecutor had said in his resolution that sought the upgrade that elements of murder—treachery, cruelty and premeditation—were established during the reinvestigation.

Leviste had owned up to the shooting hours after the killing but claimed self-defense.

No eyewitness, however, could corroborate the prosecution's and defense's versions of the killing, which took place between noon and 1 p.m. inside Leviste's office on the 9th floor of his LPL Building in Makati City.

Favoring the upgrade, the court issued an arrest warrant against Leviste and canceled the bail of P40,000 he had posted while facing the lesser offense of homicide.

Doing fine

Supt. Delvic Oreiro, MCJ warden, told the INQUIRER that the newest inmate at the 1,900-sq. m. jail compound was doing fine.

"He did not ask for anything. I was the one who asked him to cooperate and abide by all the rules here," Oreiro said when reached by phone.

While Leviste's daughter was not aware of any visits to her father on Wednesday night, Oreiro said a visitor came for the detainee and brought clothes, a mattress, two pillows and a blanket.

Supply of food

The visitor also brought the businessman his supply of food that complied with "a diet regimen," the warden said.

"We could give him rations but he has his own diet regimen. He is feeling OK. So far so good. No problem," Oreiro said.

He also had his maintenance medicine for his hypertension, the condition that kept him in the hospital following his surrender for the shooting on Jan. 12.

Leviste himself had spoken about his medical condition, known to run in the family, during a press conference at the Makati police station after his arrest on Wednesday.

"Well, I'm 67. I'm suffering from hypertension. My blood pressure is stable only because my physician has prescribed the dosage of medication. If I do not take my medication, I can have a stroke any time. And it incidentally runs in the family. Several had fatal strokes," he said.

A DAUGHTER'S LAMENT: Toni Leviste, daughter of former Batangas Governor Leviste, pours out her heart during a press conference at the family-owned LPL building in Makati City. RODEL ROTONI

Fresh air

Doctors from Ospital ng Makati examined Leviste before he was brought to his cell. While they found his blood pressure "within normal range," they recommended that he undergo an electrocardiogram. The test can detect irregularities in heartbeat.

But like any other detainee, Leviste may get some fresh air every day as he would be allowed to go out of his cell after visiting hours so he could walk around the compound.

Visiting hours are from 9 a.m. to 4 p.m.

Inside his cell, Leviste may get some entertainment from a television set and video disc player used under regulation in all of MCJ's 10 cells for male inmates.

His daughter said the family did not want preferential treatment for Leviste.

Condemned

Still decrying her father's indictment for murder and subsequent detention, only one question was on the young Leviste's mind.

"Why? What is their reason for doing all of this? Why is my father being used as a scapegoat? He is 67. He is a sick man, and they have condemned him to a life in hell for the last years of his life," said Leviste, who met reporters in her father's loft at the LPL Building.

She said her father had been cooperating since the start and had never shown any intention to run away.

"It's very hard to discount doubts that maybe there are hidden forces behind all of this. This is injustice on two families (Leviste's and the victim's). All we ask is that justice is served to both parties," she said.

No TRO

The Court of Appeals has directed Leviste to file a comment within five days on the murder charge and his arrest in connection with his petition seeking to stop his case's reinvestigation.

The appeals court, in a resolution released yesterday, did not issue a restraining order on his reinvestigation.

It noted that Leviste's arrest for murder could render his petition moot.

In his petition to the Court of Appeals, which was filed before the reinvestigation of his case was concluded, Leviste asked the appellate court to stop the Department of Justice from continuing with the reinvestigation.

The ex-governor also asked the court to stop Judge Alameda from acting on the DOJ's recommendations.

Leviste had contended that the DOJ, specifically Justice Secretary Raul Gonzalez and Senior State Prosecutor Emmanuel Velasco, had prejudged the case and were expected to upgrade his homicide charge to murder.

De las Alas' heirs had sought the reinvestigation of the case after Leviste was initially charged with homicide.

The reinvestigation lasted two days, after which the DOJ recommended that Leviste and several John and Jane Does be charged with murder for De las Alas' death.

Alameda took up the DOJ's recommendation and subsequently ordered Leviste's arrest with no bail.

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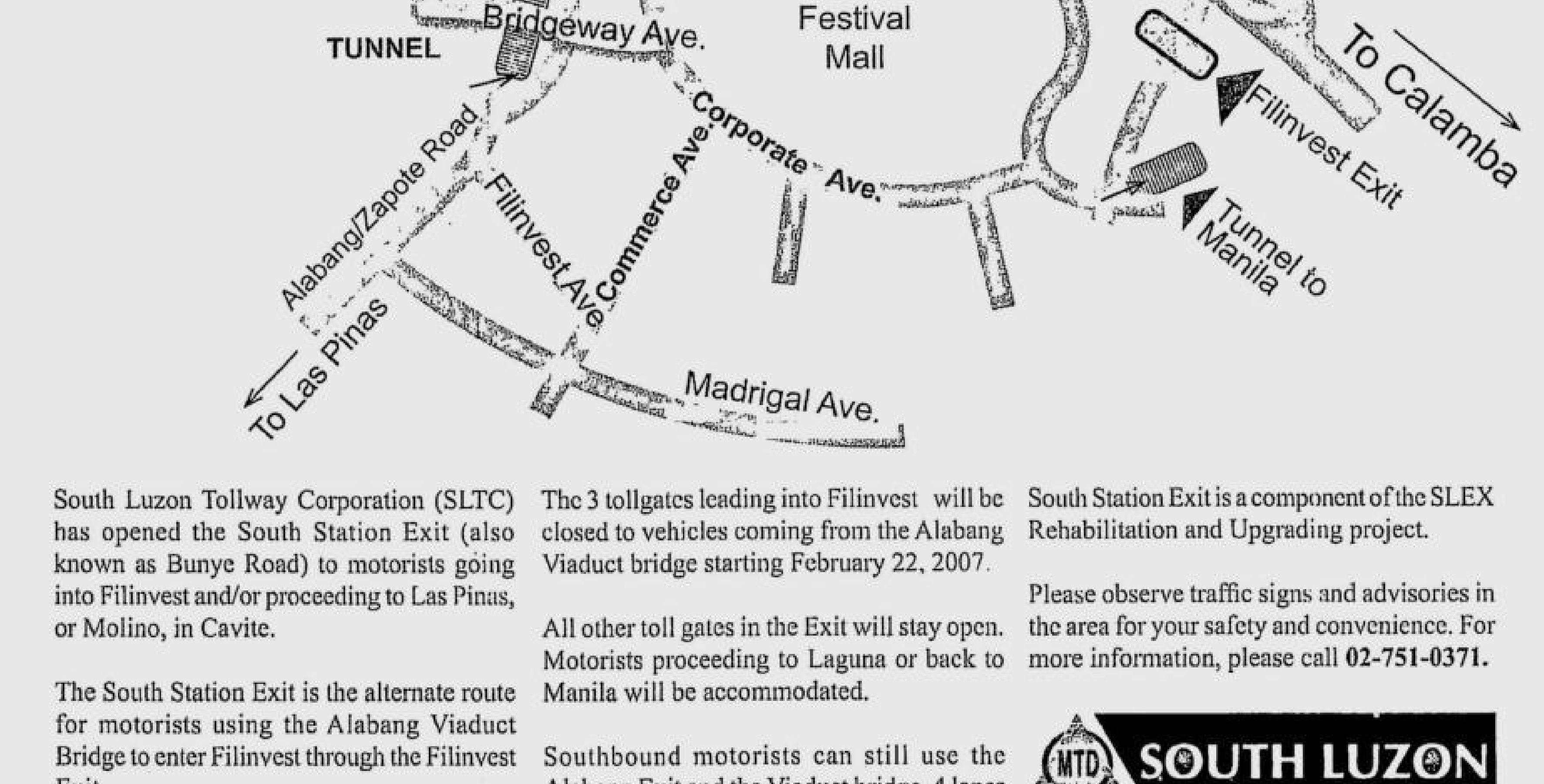

South Luzon Tollway Corporation (SLTC) has opened the South Station Exit (also known as Bunye Road) to motorists going into Filinvest and/or proceeding to Las Pinas, or Molino, in Cavite.

The South Station Exit is the alternate route for motorists using the Alabang Viaduct Bridge to enter Filinvest through the Filinvest Exit.

The 3 tollgates leading into Filinvest will be closed to vehicles coming from the Alabang Viaduct bridge starting February 22, 2007.

All other toll gates in the Exit will stay open. Motorists proceeding to Laguna or back to Manila will be accommodated.

Southbound motorists can still use the Alabang Exit and the Viaduct bridge. 4 lanes will be kept open on the bridge at all times.

South Station Exit is a component of the SLEX Rehabilitation and Upgrading project.

Please observe traffic signs and advisories in the area for your safety and convenience. For more information, please call **02-751-0371.**

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PNP: Slay plot on Erap behind new restrictions

By Gil C. Cabacungan Jr.

MALACAÑANG HAS REITERATED warnings of a plot by communist rebels to assassinate high-profile administration and opposition personalities, including jailed President Joseph Estrada and his sons.

National Security Adviser Norberto Gonzales told Palace reporters police intelligence had uncovered a fresh plan by the Communist Party of the Philippines-New People's Army (CPP-NPA) to destabilize the Arroyo administration by deploying hit men before the May elections.

"We picked up very serious information of an assassination attempt on important figures, including in the Estrada camp," Gonzales said.

Since 2001, when President Macapagal-Arroyo came to power, security officials had warned of assassination attempts, specifically against Estrada, in order to disrupt her administration.

Gonzales said the intelligence reports showed that Estrada and his sons—Sen. Jinggoy Estrada and San Juan Mayor JV Ejercito—were on top of the CPP-NPA hit list.

He said some administration officials were also on the list but he named only himself and the President.

Gonzales said Ms Arroyo had left the matter of tightening security around the targeted officials to the police.

"It's up to them (security officials) how to address this," Gonzales said.

The Philippine National Police responded by tightening security at Estrada's detention estate in Tanay, Rizal.

Chief Supt. Romeo Hilomen, chief of the Police Security and Protection Office (PSPO), said non-family members, except for his lawyers, may not visit Estrada.

"To make it safe for him, we will not allow any visitors who are not family members [or his lawyers] to enter while we still validate the threats," Hilomen said.

He denied that Estrada, the acknowledged head of the political opposition, was being isolated from his allies.

"We don't discriminate whether (someone) is with the opposition or administration. What's important is his (Estrada's) safety," Hilomen said.

Estrada, however, will ask the Commission on Human Rights to look into the restrictions against him.

Lawyer Rufus Rodriguez, the ex-President's spokesperson, said Estrada's use of his mobile phone had also been restricted.

"The PNP has no right to deny him these basic rights and to prevent his communication with the outside world. This is an illegal act and must be corrected accordingly," Rodriguez said.

He said Estrada's camp will file a complaint before the CHR for the alleged violation of his human rights.

He said Estrada's lawyers will also file an urgent motion before the Sandiganbayan "to have his rights restored, including his access to communication equipment."

"This is clearly a desperate move on the part of the administration to prevent President Estrada from participating in any discussions or planning sessions on campaign strategies which will ensure the landslide win of the opposition's senatorial candidates," Rodriguez said. *With Alcuin Papa and Norman Bordadora*

ESTRADA

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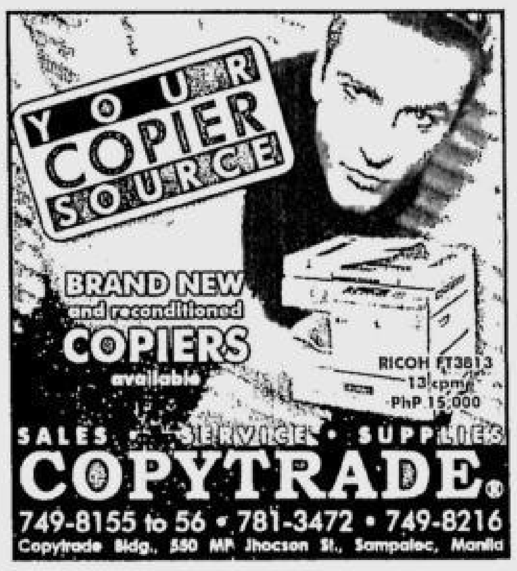

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3 Filipino students win ADB int'l essay contest

By Doris C. Dumlao

THREE FILIPINO STUDENTS WON IN AN International essay competition held by the Asian Development Bank to deepen awareness on sustainable development in Asia and the Pacific.

Carl Renan Estrellan, 28, from the Tokyo Institute of Technology, Ritchie-Anne Guzman, 26, from the Ateneo de Manila University and Charybel Magbuo, 20, from the De la Salle University, were among the 26 student representatives singled out from over 600 participants from 16 countries.

The three Filipino students will join other winners in a week-long program culminating in the "Youth Forum on Sustainable Development" in Kyoto, Japan on March 17. The forum will provide winning essayists with the opportunity to discuss issues regarding sustainable development.

The competition was co-sponsored by Road, a network of Japanese university students concerned with development issues.

'Voice of the Youth'

The event will conclude with the adoption of "the Voice of the Youth," a statement written by the students on sustainable development.

In addition, the winning essays would be assembled and published in a book, the ADB announced yesterday.

The competition, opened to university students aged 18 years to 29 years from Asia and the Pacific, is part of a series of educational events that will precede the ADB's 40th Annual Meeting to be held in Kyoto on May 6-7.

"This competition has provided the opportunity for hundreds of university students to contribute their views on major public policy issues challenging Asia and the Pacific," said Bindu Lohani, director general of ADB's regional and sustainable development department.

"The upcoming Youth Forum in Kyoto will provide an exciting opportunity for the winning essayists to deliberate development priorities and ways in which the region's environmental, economic, and social challenges can be effectively addressed with the active involvement of young people."

The essays, written from a country or regional perspective, addressed one of three specific topics: economic growth and environmental conservation; human resource development and institutions; and industry and infrastructure.

International panel of judges

Winners were judged on the basis of originality and creativity of thought, structure and coherence of arguments, awareness of sustainable development within the context of the essayist's environment and realities and relevance to the competition's themes.

A three-member independent jury reviewed each of the more than 600 essays submitted in the student essay competition. Each essay is the independent work of the student and reflects personal views.

Jury members included Ashok Khosla, chair of Development Alternatives from New Delhi, India and Erna Witoelar, United Nations Special Ambassador for Millennium Development Goals in Asia and the Pacific from Jakarta, Indonesia. Tseuneaki Yoshida, professor of project planning and management at the University of Tokyo, chaired the jury.

'PERMIT TO CAMPAIGN'

Military knows who's paying NPA

By Delfin T. Mallari Jr., *Inquirer Southern Luzon* and Alcuin Papa

LUCENA CITY—THE MILITARY HAS DIScovered a way to find out who among election candidates has paid the so-called "permit to campaign" (PTC) fee to the communist New People's Army rebels.

If a candidate's campaign posters and streamers remain undamaged, especially if posted in remote areas believed to be controlled by the communist guerrillas, then most probably the politician has paid his PTC fee.

"That's what we recently learned from Quezon politicians," Col. Rhoderick Parayno, spokesman of the military's Southern Luzon Command, told the INQUIRER.

Quezon Board Member Eladio Pasamba told Parayno on Monday that NPA rebels would usually destroy campaign posters and streamers of politicians who refuse to submit to the financial imposition of the revolutionary movement.

"But once the politician has settled his PTC fee, the NPA rebels protect the campaign materials of the candidates. I was even told that the communist guerrillas sometimes campaign for the politician once the PTC fee is paid," Pasamba said.

The communist rebel movement, through the NPA, traditionally collects PTC fees during elections. Candidates who refuse or fail to make the payment in cash or in kind face harassment or attacks from the rebel group.

For most politicians in Quezon province, paying the PTC fee was part and parcel of the election campaign.

"There's nothing we can do. We want a hassle-free election campaign," said one candidate who requested anonymity.

The same candidate admitted that aside from cash payment, he was asked to "donate" a laptop computer and several boxes of canned goods.

In Manila, Philippine National Police Chief Dir. Gen. Oscar Calderon told reporters yesterday that the NPA was now e-mailing "extortion letters" to politicians for the coming elections.

Calderon said this was the first time the NPA had tried to extort money from candidates through the Internet.

The PNP chief urged politicians and victims of extortion by the NPA to "report the matter to police" so they could take the appropriate action and arrest the extortionists.

"The statements they will give us can be the basis to file a case. We can entrap them (extortionists) and arrest them while in possession of the money," Calderon said.

He said the NPA usually asked a P50,000 PTC fee from candidates running for senator. From previous reports, the PTC fees for national and local officials could go up to P100,000, depending on the area.

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  February 19 - March 2, 2007 M-W-F 6:00 PM - 8:00 PM
- CREATIVE SALESMANSHIP AND CLIENT RELATIONS
  February 19 - March 2, 2007 M-W-F 6:00 PM - 8:00 PM
- EFFECTIVE ORAL COMMUNICATION
  February 20 - March 6, 2007 T-TH 6:00 PM - 8:30 PM
- RECORDS AND FILE MANAGEMENT
  February 20 - March 6, 2007 T-TH 6:00 PM - 8:30 PM
- PROJECT FEASIBILITY STUDIES
  February 20 - March 6, 2007 T-TH 6:00 PM - 8:30 PM
- HOW TO HANDLE PROBLEM EMPLOYEES
  February 17, 2007 Saturday 9:00 AM - 12:00 NN
- ACCOUNTING FOR NON-ACCOUNTANTS
  February 24 - March 24, 2007 Saturday 9:00 PM - 12:00 NN
- HOW TO START A BUSINESS
  February 24 - March 17, 2007 Saturday 9:00 PM - 12:00 NN
- ASSERTIVENESS TRAINING FOR MANAGERS & SUPERVISORS
  February 17, 2007 Saturday 1:00 PM - 5:00 PM
- HUMAN RELATIONS
  February 17, 2007 Saturday 1:00 PM - 5:00 PM
- WAREHOUSE OPERATIONS AND MANAGEMENT
  February 24 - March 10, 2007 Saturday 1:00 PM - 5:00 PM
- PSYCHOLOGICAL TESTS IN BUSINESS AND INDUSTRY
  February 24 - March 10, 2007 Saturday 1:00 PM - 5:00 PM
- MATERIALS MANAGEMENT
  February 18 - March 4, 2007 Sunday 9:00 AM - 12:00 NN
- EXPORT BUSINESS AND COSTING
  February 18 - March 4, 2007 Sunday 9:00 AM - 12:00 NN
- COST ESTIMATION FOR BUILDING CONSTRUCTION
  February 18 - March 4, 2007 Sunday 9:00 AM - 12:00 NN
- PERT/CPM
  February 18 - March 4, 2007 Sunday 1:00 PM - 5:00 PM
- QUALITY CONTROL
  February 18 - March 4, 2007 Sunday 1:00 PM - 5:00PM
- EFFECTIVE VEHICLE MANAGEMENT
  February18 - March 4, 2007 Sunday 1:00 PM - 5:00 PM
- EFFECTIVE LEADERSHIP PROGRAM
  February 21, 2007 Wednesday 6:00 PM - 8:00 PM
- PLANNING, DIRECTING, AND CONTROLLING THE WORK
  February 19, 2007 Monday 6:00 PM - 8:00 PM
- MOTIVATION: THE KEY TO WINNING
  February 23, 2007 Friday 6:00 PM - 8:00 PM
- STEPS IN BUSINESS FORMATION AND ORGANIZATION
  February 24, 2007 Saturday 1:00 PM - 5:00 PM
- HOW TO DETECT AND PREVENT FRAUDS IN WAREHOUSE
  March 3, 2007 Saturday 1:00 PM - 5:00 PM
- CONFIDENCE BUILDING & PERSONALITY DEVELOPMENT
  February 19, 2007 Monday 6:00 PM - 8:00 PM
- TRAINING PEOPLE ON PROPER TELEPHONE BEHAVIOR
  February 23, 2007 Friday 6:00 PM - 8:00 PM
- INVENTORY PLANNING AND CONTROL
  February 25, 2007 Sunday 9:00 AM - 12:00 NN

DIPLOMA IN BUSINESS MANAGEMENT
- PRINCIPLES OF MANAGEMENT
  February 17, 2007 Saturday 9:00 AM - 5:00 PM
- HUMAN BEHAVIOR IN ORGANIZATION
  Februry 24, 2007 Saturday 9:00 AM - 5:00 PM
- HUMAN RESOURCES MANAGEMENT
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PHILHEALTH CIRCULAR
No. 05, s-2007

TO : ALL MEMBERS OF THE NATIONAL HEALTH INSURANCE PROGRAM, ACCREDITED HEALTH CARE PROVIDERS AND ALL OTHERS CONCERNED

SUBJECT : Clarification to PhilHealth Rules on Payment of Minor Surgical Procedures and Services per Circular No. 9, series - 2002

This Circular is issued to facilitate rational payment of professional fees for daily visits of patients with minor surgical procedures and services.

1. It is reiterated that payment of professional fees for procedures and services listed in the Relative Value Scale (RVS) covers payment for preoperative visits, intraoperative services and postoperative visits within 90 days from admission
2. However, a separate payment for daily visits and management may be allowed for minor surgical procedures (such as thoracentesis, chemotherapy, lumbar tap, cutdown, tracheostomy) for patients with concomitant medical condition and admitted for more than 24 hours.
3. Minor surgical procedures and services are those procedures listed in the RVS with Relative Value Units (RVU) of 30 and below. Example:

CODE	PROCEDURE	RVU	PROFESSIONAL FEE (PF)	FINAL PF
32002	Thoracentesis for pneumothorax	15	600 pesos	2,100 pesos
Medical management for 6 days (Specialist 250/day)		0	1,500 pesos	

4. However, outpatient procedures or day surgeries performed in accredited ambulatory surgical clinics and hospitals for patients who require less than 24 hours stay are not covered by this circular.
5. Separate payment for co-management of the patient is allowed only for all surgeries and services when the patient's condition or surgery complications require expertise beyond that of the surgeon.

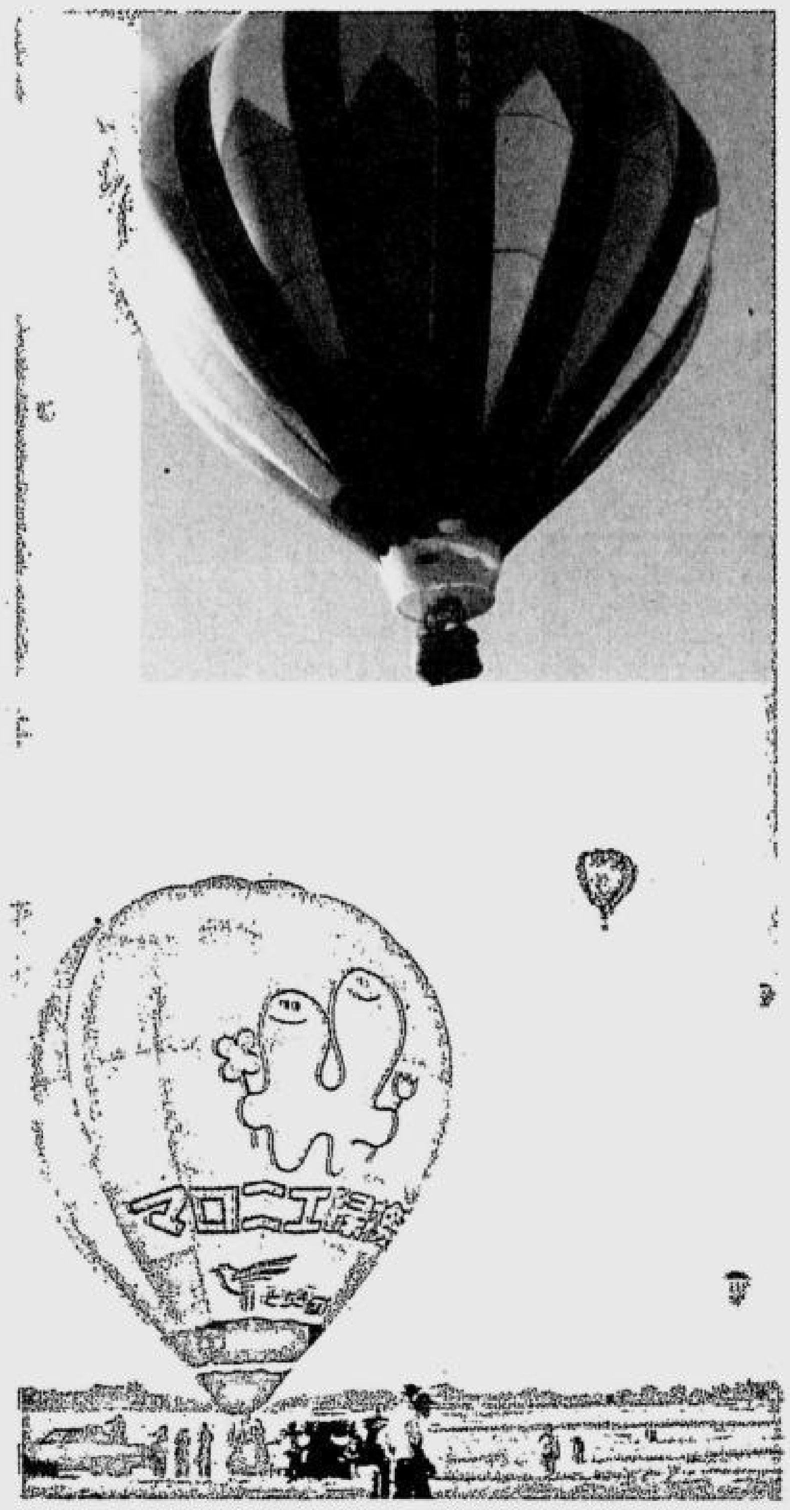
This Circular shall take effect for all claims with admission dates starting February 1, 2007.

All other issuances inconsistent with this circular are hereby modified or repealed accordingly.

For your information and guidance.

(Sgd.) LORNA O. FAJARDO
Acting President and CEO

Date Signed: January 25, 2007



UP, UP AND AWAY: More than 20 hot air balloons from all over the world are taking part in the four-day Philippine International Hot Air Balloon Festival that started on Thursday in Clark Field in Angeles City, Pampanga. TONETTE T. OREJAS/INQUIRER CENTRAL LUZON

Malik: General, Sulu execs rais

From page A1

Dolorfino had earlier vigorously denied his group was forced to remain at Panamao, but on Tuesday he finally admitted during his confirmation hearing at the Commission on Appointments that he and his men had been taken hostage by their MNLF hosts.

Malacañang sources had said P450,000 in ransom was paid to the MNLF.

But Malik maintained that the P350,000 he received was "goodwill money" for the families of nine MNLF members who were killed in a "misencounter" with Philippine Marines in Timpooc, Patikul, on Jolo island on Jan. 18.

Malik met with the INQUIRER at a four-story Pagoda-style structure, centerpiece of a 25-hectare complex occupied by the MNLF at Barangay Bitan-ag here.

MNLF regulars milled around listening to the INQUIRER interview. Also in the camp was MNLF chief of staff Julmabrie Misuari, a nephew of MNLF chair Nur Misuari. Misuari is under house arrest in Manila while being tried for a rebellion on Jolo that left over 100 people dead.

On Jan. 21, Dolorfino, Santos and several others came to look into the two successive encounters between the Marines and a group of armed men. Malik said the Marines "massacred" nine MNLF members who were aboard a Ford pickup.

Legitimate encounter

Marine Brig. Gen. Juancho Sabban said his men were pursuing an Abu Sayyaf group that fled aboard a pickup after killing three Marines in an ambush.

Sabban maintained it was a "legitimate encounter" with the Abu Sayyaf, saying that Patikul was an Abu Sayyaf territory, not MNLF.

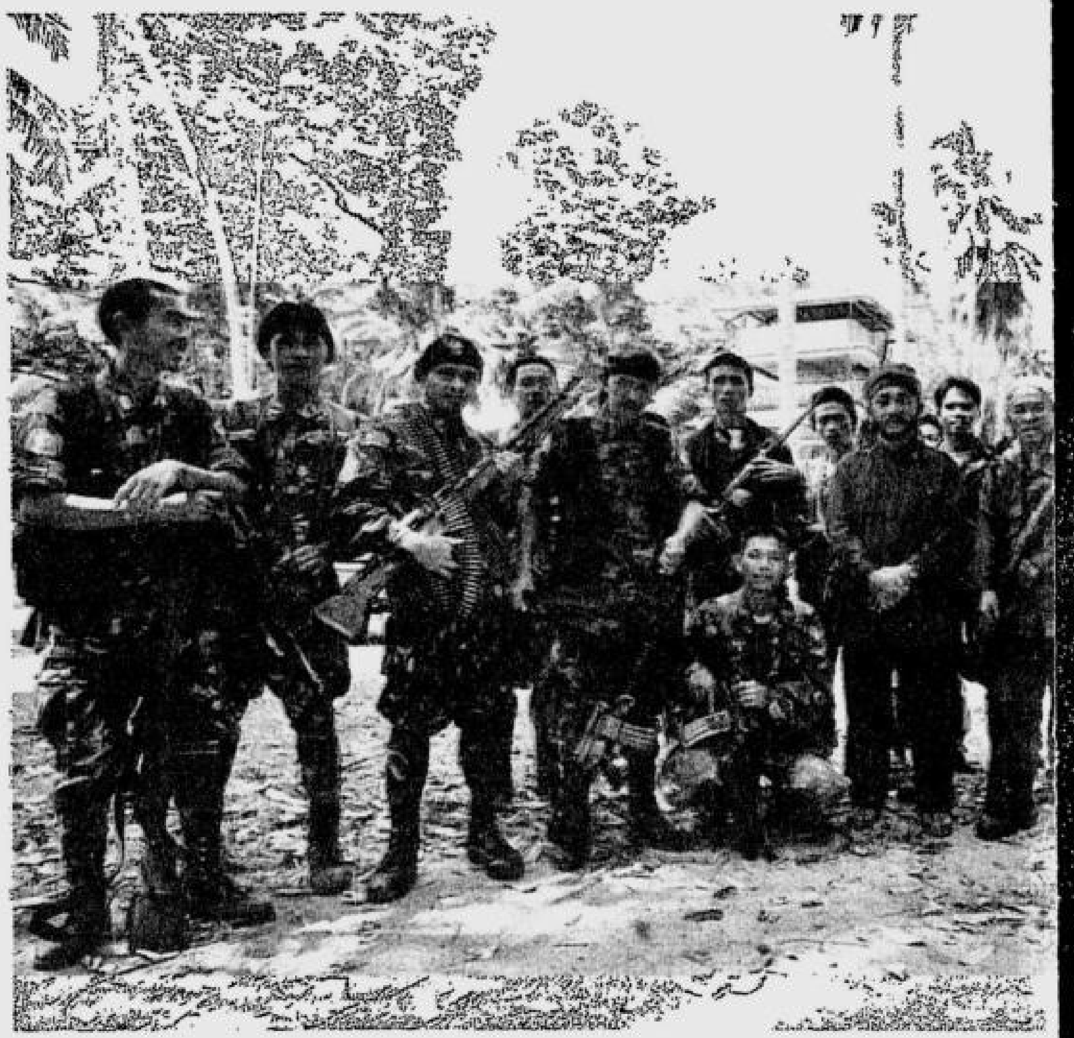
Malik said that Dolorfino and Santos were working on an "amicable settlement" which included the payment of "goodwill money" to the families of the slain MNLF members.

"That was the main objective of their coming here last Friday. We were talking about goodwill money," Malik said, speaking alternately in Filipino and English.

"It would have been blood money if the killing was intentional, but since it was a misencounter, it was goodwill money," he said.

During the discussion, Malik said the topic shifted to finding ways to put an end to the series of misencounters.

Malik maintained there was no hostage-taking, and slammed Dolorfino for saying he was taken hostage by the MNLF for 50 hours. Dolorfino and 20 others were released Sunday afternoon at the public school grounds here.



IN THE HEART OF MNLF STRONGHOLD: Members of the MNLF Bangsamoro Armed Forces
Ustadz Habier Malik pose for the INQUIRER at their 25-ha headquarters in Baragay Bitan-ag in Pa

'Impure motives'

"If he does not deny what he said and affi
earlier pronouncement that there w
hostage-taking, it means he was coming her
impure motives," Malik said.

According to Malik, Dolorfino and Sant
been going to the MNLF camp for some tim

"If the talk is just about misencounters, t
no end there. So we wanted to solve it at a
level, a tripartite meeting scheduled on

First female hostage in Nigeria is Filipina

From page A1

a sharp increase in hostage-takings in the Delta. The attacks are carried out by a mixture of separatist groups with a political agenda and criminal gangs lured by the attraction of easy ransom money.

The separatists want a bigger share of the oil revenue—Nigeria is the world's sixth largest exporter—for the local population, much of which lives in grinding poverty.

Nigerian gunmen did release a seriously ill British hostage on Wednesday, but with two other kidnappings carried out on the same day, there was no sign of any let up in the violent attacks against oil interests and anyone perceived as being linked to the oil industry.

Ban on Filipino workers

Their kidnapping prompted President Macapagal-Arroyo to slap a temporary ban on Filipinos going to work in Nigeria, where nearly 4,000 Filipinos are already employed.

"Our embassy is working closely with the Nigerian authorities to try and free the Filipinos now being held captive," said Department of Foreign Affairs spokesperson Ed Malaya.

Malaya said the government had not had "direct contact" with the 24 seamen but added that Nigerian authorities had.

"They are said to be in good health," Malaya said. He said the seamen were believed to be held by their abductors in a swamp area in the delta region. "That's as far as we know," he said.

CNN footage of Filipinos

A CNN report yesterday showed what the network said were the 24 hostages, who looked frightened and disheveled as masked militants shot off rounds of machine gun fire around them.

"The hostages, held in captivity since their cargo ship was seized Jan. 20, sat on white plastic chairs, lined up in a row, not knowing if they would live or die," CNN said on its website.

A FACELESS new militant group has launched unprecedented attacks o
Delta region of Nigeria, Africa's top oil producer. This photo taken on Ja
Niger Delta.

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SCHEDULE OF EXAMINATIONS IN MATH AND ENGLISH:
Pres. Elpidio Quirino – Sat., March 31, 2007
Gov. Demetrio Quirino, Sr. – Sat., April 21, 2007
Sec. Guillermo De Vega – Sat., May 5, 2007

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abal Uhud Task Force together with MNLF commander
namao, Sulu. REM ZAMORA

When we asked Undersecretary Santos if it would push through, he replied there was a 95-percent possibility it would. 'Why not hold it now, here,' I said," Malik recalled.

Not joking

Malik said he even told Dolorfino and Santos to hold the talks at the Pagoda.

"They thought I was joking," Malik said.

After the discussions, Dolorfino's group stood up saying they were leaving, Malik said.

"I said, no, no, *mag*-overnight *kayo dito*," he said.

the places where foreigners work and live in the Niger
. 30 shows the militants patrolling the creeks of the
REUTERS

"Some militants pointed weapons at them; others proudly brandished rocket-propelled grenades," it said.

The network quoted Elmer Nacionales, the cargo ship's chief officer, as saying: "I have a family and we need to communicate with them."

Malaya said he had seen the broadcast but could not comment.

Frenchman of Total

The Frenchman, identified as Gerard Laporal, married to a Nigerian woman and under local contract to French oil group Total, was picked up by armed men as he returned home around 9 p.m. Wednesday, the sources said.

"He was driving home on his own when he was attacked," one industry source said on condition of anonymity.

Laporal, in his 50s, is the founder of a small logistics company whose name was not given. Prior to setting up his own company, he worked for Netco Dietsmann, the Nigerian arm of the Monaco-based oil services company Dietsmann, according to industry sources.

This was the first time a Frenchman working on a local contract for Total had been seized in the Niger Delta region of southern Nigeria. Industry sources said Total had so far been one of the oil companies less targeted.

Other nationals captive

In addition to the 26 Filipinos and the newly kidnapped Frenchman, two Italians, one American and a Lebanese national are still being held by different armed groups.

Nine Chinese oil workers from the China National Petroleum Corp. (CNPC) kidnapped Jan. 25 were freed on Sunday.

Nigeria, which derives more than 95 percent of its foreign exchange earnings from oil, lost more than half a million barrels a day last year to unrest in the Delta. *AFP*

Dureza says Moro rebel leader agreed to give gov't workers access to remote villages in Jolo

JESUS DUREZA, PRESIDENTIAL adviser on the peace process, said yesterday he had secured the commitment of Moro National Liberation Front (MNLF) leader Habier Malik to give access to government workers to develop remote villages on Jolo island.

"We thrashed it out and we agreed to continue our work for peace and development because Jolo needs upscaled intervention," Dureza told Agence France Presse, referring to joint work by the MNLF and the government.

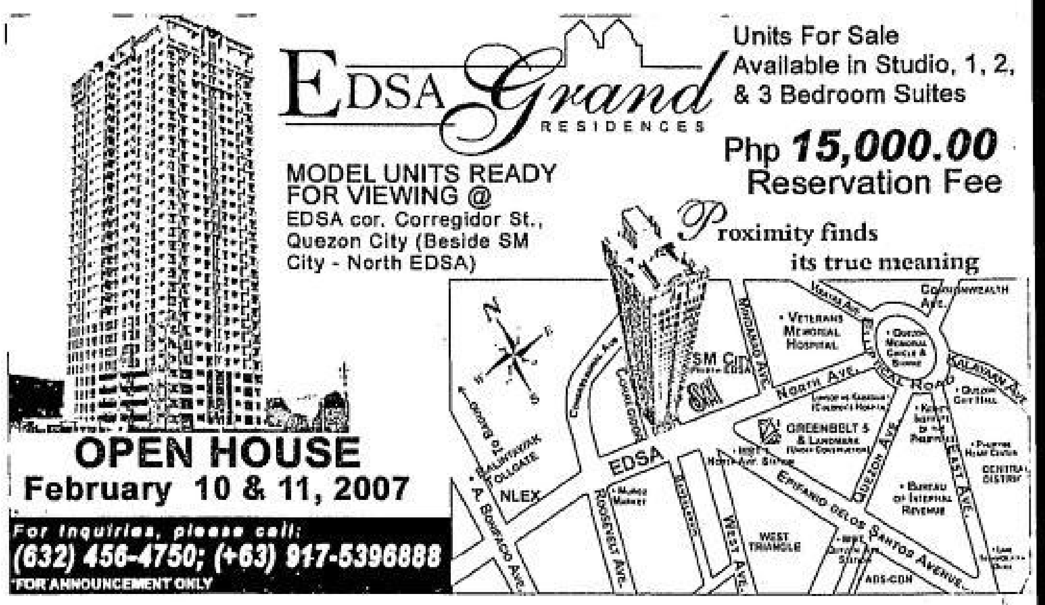
Dureza said he was in Mindanao to "pursue convergence work" in development aid, and would meet with his MNLF contacts later yesterday.

Malik's men held Dureza's deputy Ramon Santos, Maj. Gen. Benjamin Dolorfino and 19 security aides hostage for two days when they went to Jolo to speak with MNLF leaders last week.

The MNLF was formerly a separatist group that signed a peace treaty with Manila in 1996, settling for limited autonomy.

Hundreds of MNLF fighters were integrated into the Philippine military and police forces under the deal, but the government failed to disarm thousands of others.

Malik seized Dolorfino's group and demanded a fresh meeting with the Organization of the Islamic Conference (OIC), the influential organization of Muslim countries which brokered the peace pact. *AFP*



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Hidden agendas

SENATORIAL ELECTIONS, TO BE SURE, HAVE always been a referendum on the sitting administration. This means they are about more than who happens to be president, they are also about the policies the administration stands for as a whole. Those opposed to an administration may be fixated on the incumbent and may be capitalizing on negative public opinion about a president. But any opposition is duty-bound to present an alternative set of policies as well. What the public is entitled to, on the most basic of levels, is for both sides to be up-front about what their Senate slates represent.

EDITORIAL

Right now as both sides (and in a midterm election such as this one, there can only ever be two sides) pick their senatorial teams, the paramount consideration is "winnability." Once the candidates start campaigning, however, the public deserves to know the answers to several questions.

For the administration, what is its "Team Unity" united behind? President Macapagal-Arroyo's policies? Or only some, but not all, of them? If so, which? Only her VAT increases, but not her record on human rights? Or do they intend to campaign for a vindication of the President as a leader?

Then again, why does the President seem to need them more than they need her? This is a President who doesn't dare raise anyone's hands except in carefully controlled circumstances—that is, before captive audiences of known supporters. This is a marked contrast with all previous administrations and the President's old practice of campaigning for her senatorial tickets in 2001 and 2004. If she's so strong, why is she acting so weak?

The administration Senate slate is a coalition. What is the election about to these coalesced parties?

The President's pet party, Kampi, has been gobbling up members of the hitherto dominant administration party, Lakas-CMD. She has shrugged off Lakas' demands for party loyalty. What's in it for Kampi, and what price will Lakas have to pay for standing by as its ranks are raided? News reports say accommodations are being made for Lakas members in the Cabinet and the bureaucracy. On the eve of elections, and afterward for defeated candidates?

What is the price of Eduardo M. Cojuangco's Nationalist People's Coalition alliance with the administration? Four of its six candidates are affiliated with the Palace, which holds the Presidential Commission on Good Government over Cojuangco and his disputed financial interests in the country's largest conglomerate, San Miguel Corp. Will they vote as a bloc in the President's, or Cojuangco's, interests, or do both now happily coexist side by side. The only way they can, considering the President's duty to defend the national interest, is if she set that aside and reached a deal with Cojuangco. And what deals are those?

And where do all the coalition partners stand on the question of Executive-Senate relations after the elections? Speaker Jose de Venecia says the campaign to amend the Constitution will resume after the polls. A people's initiative proposing a unicameral presidential system will be the first step. Then a new unicameral National Assembly will go on to shift to the parliamentary system, although Kampi isn't interested in the parliamentary system, a Lakas advocacy.

Is the administration senatorial slate an abolitionist slate? A parliamentarist one? Will it vote independently, and if so, why has the President, who publicly supports the Lakas position, endorsed a slate that intends to be independent? What about the President's actions like EO 464, CPR, etc., would the administration slate bind itself to do the Palace's bidding and turn a blind eye to human rights violations?

With regard to the opposition, on what is the "United Opposition" united? A sense that the public is unfriendly to the administration, at least in vote-rich Luzon, to be sure. A likely inclination to impeach the President, too. But beyond that, what?

Where does it stand on the plunder case against disgraced former President Joseph Estrada, for example? There is little the Senate can do about Estrada's trial, except make noise or propose an amnesty for Estrada as a condition to a possible future one for Ms Arroyo (among many possible scenarios).

As for all of the above, do they even have a clue? Can they propose legislation, much less improve whatever the Palace proposes?

There are too many hidden agendas lurking in the background, too many potential deals that belie the rhetoric.

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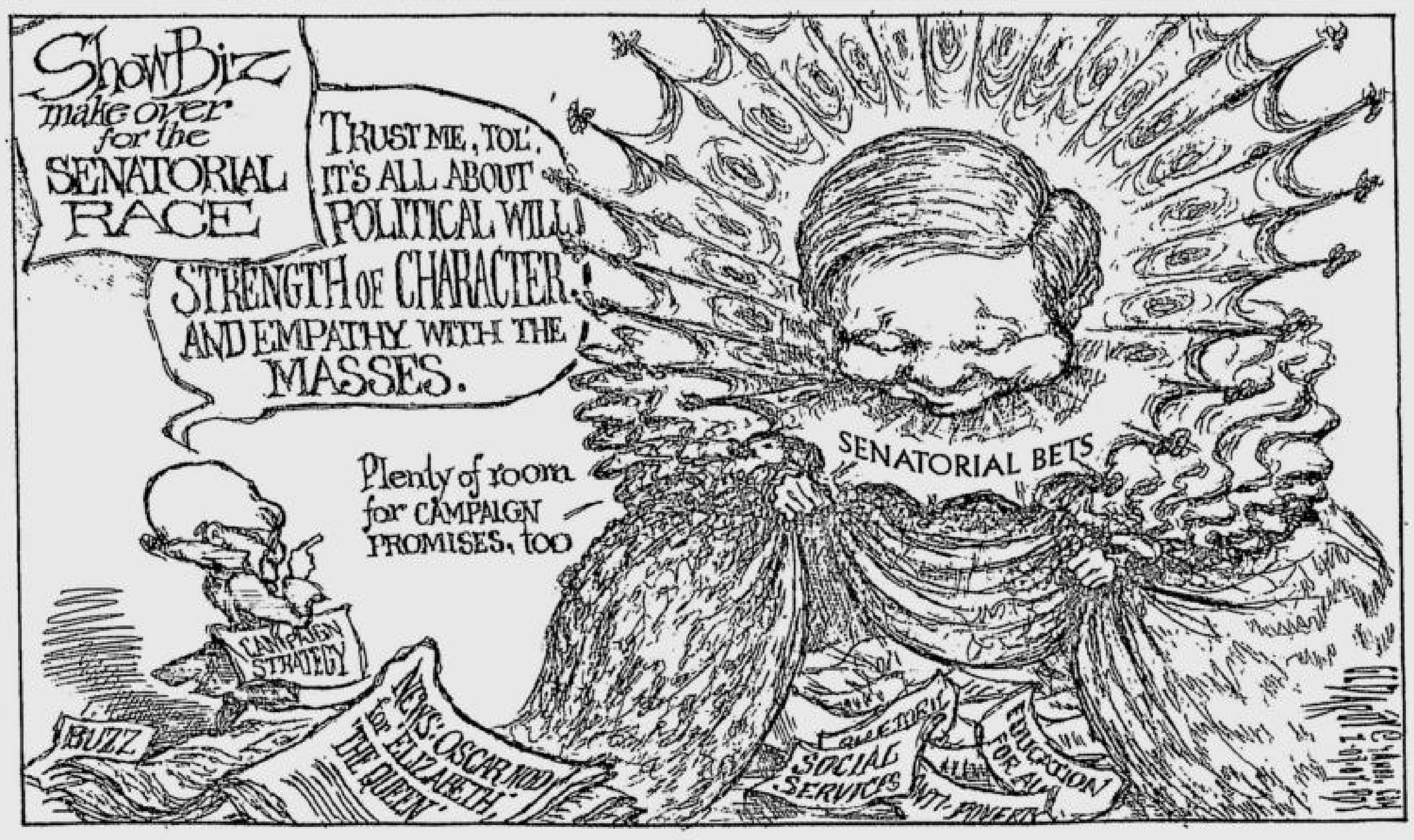
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The failed biddings for Transco

AS I SEE IT

Neal H. Cruz

FOR THE THIRD TIME, THE PUBLIC BIDDING for the assets of the National Transmission Corp. (Transco) last Feb. 5 was declared a failure because only one consortium submitted a bid. The only bidder was Citadel Holdings Inc., a private holding company owned by the Delgado family. In all three failed biddings (the two others were conducted in 2002 and 2004), Citadel was the only serious bidder. Doesn't the law say that after two failed biddings, the parties should go into negotiations to conclude a contract?

It has been six years since the Electric Power Industry Reform Act (Epira) was passed by Congress in 2001, but until now the power industry has not been totally privatized. The purpose of Epira was to lower the cost of electricity for consumers through competition among many private companies because the government-owned National Power Corp. (Napocor), which controls all power generation plants, is a giant white elephant. Its officials have managed to lose billions of pesos through the years besides.

It was hoped that with many private players competing in the power industry, competition would drive electricity costs down. A few Napocor generation plants have already been privatized and more are in the process of being sold. The distribution companies, like Meralco, are already private. The third component, the transmission lines that feed the electricity from the power plants to the distributors, is the missing link. That is Transco. And for as long as the privatization of Transco is delayed, the privatization of the whole power industry is delayed and the dream to reduce electricity costs will remain a dream.

Three bidders initially expressed interest in the third bidding for the 25-year concession to run Transco. But only one, Citadel, and its foreign partner, Italy's $5-billion electricity transmission company, Terna Spa, submitted a bid on the bid date last Feb. 5.

It was a repeat of the two other failed bids. It was only Citadel that was interested enough to submit a bid. In 2002, it brought world-class grid operators to the bidding like National Grid of the United Kingdom. In 2004, it brought Hydro Quebec of Canada. Now it is Terna Spa, which controls 98 percent of Italy's electricity infrastructure and is a flag-bearer for Italy and the European Union.

There are two reasons investors are not so keen on bidding for Transco. One is the reported P15-billion debt of Transco. The other is the still unresolved congressional franchise of Transco. In fact, those were the very issues cited by other parties for their non-participation in the bidding.

But Citadel said it was willing to take the risk. Hence it feels that, as the law mandates, a negotiated agreement should be be concluded.

Government rules allow the Power Sector Assets and Liability Management Corp. (Psalm) to enter into direct negotiations with Citadel. Citadel has announced that it will honor, and in fact has already signed, all required transaction agreements issued by Psalm to execute the concession agreement as of Feb. 5, 2007. "This means we accept on an 'as is where is' basis the final execution version of the documents given to us by Psalm," said Citadel.

Citadel has agreed to pay the government what it listed as its asking price. With this firm offer, plus the fact that all documents have been signed, and the consortium has a $30-billion bid bond deposited to back up its commitments, Citadel believes that the government can accept its offer. Citadel has already communicated to Psalm that it is ready, willing and able to negotiate to expedite the privatization.

The privatization process is supported by all major multilateral institutions which are waiting for a clear signal of government effectiveness. Note that at least two years have passed between the three failed biddings. That means that if another public bidding is scheduled, the privatization calendar could be delayed by another two years without any guarantee of better terms for the government.

Note also that it costs the bidder millions of dollars just to prepare the documents and to join the bidding itself.

It should be said that in the failed Feb. 5 bidding, the entire Psalm board and the people in charge of the privatization process went about it in a professional way. They were open with all bidders. Nobody had the upper hand in the bidding, which had been postponed several times—from Sept. 27, 2006 to Feb. 5, 2007—just to accommodate the requests of other bidders. All three bidders had ample time to review the documents and give their comments to Psalm. The transaction documents went through three revisions in which all the bidders were able to give their comments.

Foreign advisers, such as Rothschilds and Credit Suisse, helped the government.

Citadel says it joined the bidding in good faith and complied with all the terms and requirements prescribed by Psalm. It feels confident that its bid was technically and financially superior. In short, this was a transparent and fair bidding where not one of the bidders had any advantage.

TODAY'S JOKE:

I see that Rep. Prospero Pichay is now in the administration senatorial ticket. Malacañang-sponsored surveys reportedly put him in fifth place.

Pichay is preceded by *okra* (4th place), *sitaw* (3rd), *repolyo* (2nd) and *kangkong* (1st).

Why even expect free parking?

PASSION FOR REASON

Raul C. Pangalangan

THE COURT OF APPEALS HAS REPORTEDLY ruled that shopping malls violate no law when they charge parking fees. Apparently, the Senate committees on trade and industry and on justice and human rights declared it illegal for shopping malls to collect parking fees because this was in violation of the building code and was "anticonsumer."

I'm glad the CA has rectified the misplaced populism of the Senate. Parking is a private benefit, both to the customers and the mall owners. Let the customers decide how much they are willing to pay for the benefit and, the malls, how far they can subsidize parking to retain their patrons. That is how markets work. It depends on how much the customers cherish their car-riding habits, and how desperate the malls are in retaining their customers.

The question of who pays for parking must not be decided by parliaments. It must be decided by consumers and mall owners as free players in the open market. Out there in the marketplace, they arrive at what contract law calls the fictive "meeting of the minds on offer and acceptance." (The classic limerick in Obligations and Contracts goes like this: "She offered her honor, He honored her offer, and All night long, It was honor and offer." It is an apt metaphor, I should say, for what is going on in our country.)

The venerable Senate committees merely reflected the populist temper of the times, and misconstrued the meaning of democracy in politics and democracy in the economics. In politics, we vote our communal conscience and speak through the ballot. In the market, we vote our private tastes and speak with our pocketbooks. These two democracies reign over separate realms—what constitutionalists call the "public/private distinction"—and the Filipino tragedy is that we have conflated the two. I recall the advice I got in a zendo: "You can make a temple out of a marketplace, or a marketplace out of a temple."

This is not the first legislative attempt, nor would it be the last, to make market decisions politically. Recently, there was talk of regulating how much credit card companies collect from users. Listen, nobody is forcing you to use a credit card. Why use it, and then ask someone else to pay the cost?

Just like any Filipino consumer, I am aghast when stores tack on a "surcharge" when I use plastic or offer me a "discount" if I use cash. But these are decisions we make for ourselves, that is to say, to use a card to avoid the inconvenience of walking around with wads of cash or, for instance, pay in peso bills in small family-run stores because, as a matter of principle, we want them to keep the 6 percent surcharge that Visa will otherwise pocket. By using plastic to "victimize" only those humongous soulless malls, you the consumer exercise your countervailing power to make your own Mastercard moments.

Conversely, stores should wise up and realize that they lose potential buyers if they make cards more expensive to use, though again, that is a cost-benefit calculus for them alone to weigh.

But there are actually well-entrenched grounds for the public regulation of private market transactions. In the case of credit cards, the most compelling is public safety. The Supreme Court, in upholding the Bouncing Checks Law, long ago recognized the perils of a world where people used cash for everything (which is just as dangerous as a world without credit cards). We would be moving around with *bayongs* full of peso bills, a horrible nightmare for the Philippine National Police (or one never-ending bonanza, come to think of it!).

But, as former Chief Justice Artemio Panganiban once said, there's got to be a right way to do the right thing at the right moment. And, in the case of credit card surcharges, state action must be confined to keeping down usurious interests, preventing fraud, and safeguarding consumers against the fine print. In these, the public is said to have a stake—nothing less but, alas, nothing more.

The same logic goes with parking. It has a cost, not just to the mall owners and mall-goers, but to the public. We non-mall-goers all pay the price when traffic builds up around the shopping areas, when cars spew their exhaust into Manila's air, when car owners switch on their air conditioners and burn fossil fuels imported with hard currency, when man-hours are wasted inside a car (when we can waste them more comfortably in Starbucks!).

Surely, we can ask our government to reduce that cost, and shift that burden to the car-riders and the malls, but not to allocate which of them pays more. Foreign cities have found subtler ways that do not shift the burden to one party alone while exempting the other. That is what zoning regulations do. No shop can get state permits unless they provide on-site parking, but they are free to shift those costs to the shoppers. Also, they offer incentives to relocate to the suburbs with parking spaces galore, or coordinate with public transport (e.g., the MRT) so that "going public" is not like going on a safari.

Yet the Senate would allocate those costs by legal fiat, presumably because the shoppers have more votes than mall owners. The senators are wrong. They will relieve the shoppers of their duty to minimize the burden on nature (the "carbon footprint"), and "corporatize" that which is every human being's duty to care for the earth and for those we leave behind.

Harvard philosopher Michael Sandel spoke of "a nation hungry for community but unwilling to abide restraint, yearning for moral purpose but in no mood for sacrifice." Our post-Edsa republic is one such: indulgent, eternally pandering to the gallery, and excusing us from sacrifice. We have fallen for the "politics of easy virtue."

Comments to passionforreason@gmail.com

Madhouse

ANALYSIS

Amando Doronila

THE 2007 MID-TERM ELECTION IS TURNING into bedlam, making the voters wonder whether they are voting to send inmates to a madhouse called the Senate.

At no time has the selection of senatorial candidates been so splintered by contending factions and political parties as it is today. Alignments have become so extremely fluid that four days before the deadline for the submission of the certificates of candidacy, the composition of the rival senatorial tickets and the alignments of the candidates remained nebulous.

What is clear is that the 2007 senatorial polls have touched off an unprecedented realignment of political forces, involving migrations across party lines. These cross-overs reflect the total disintegration of the party system since President Ferdinand Marcos dismantled the two-party alignments with his martial law powers in 1972.

Nothing can be more misleading than defining the May contest as a clash between the two main alignments: the United Opposition (UNO) and the administration's Team Unity. This dichotomy is an artificial divide and a clumsy attempt to reconstruct the long-buried two-party system. What remains from its demise are fragments of political factions and new party structures built on the ruins of the old party system, following the collapse of the Marcos dictatorship in 1986.

There is absolutely no coherence in these emerging realignments. Prior to martial law, the Nacionalista Party-Liberal Party enclosure left some space to accommodate third-party movements or even maverick members who defied party discipline. In those days, mavericks with huge personal electoral following were accommodated under the euphemism of "guest candidates."

One outstanding example was Sen. Claro M. Recto, who was given asylum by the Liberal Party, as a guest, following a falling out with the immensely popular President Ramon Magsaysay, who excluded him from the NP senatorial line-up in the 1957 elections after they had tangled over a congressional resolution supporting the United States in warning Communist China from attacking Formosa. Not even Magsaysay's popularity could stop Recto's election.

The formation of senatorial slates for the May election has led to three developments: first, the inadequacy of two major alignments to accommodate the clashing ambitions and motivations of competing blocs; second, the third force or "middle force" movement has been squeezed out; and, third, this fragmentation rules out any sweep by any coalition and rules out the domination of the Senate by either the administration or the "united opposition." This development foreshadows an unruly Senate, more fractious than what we have seen since the impeachment trial of President Joseph Estrada in 2000.

The selection of candidates has narrowed to a few blocs, whose leading members are being raided by both the UNO and the Unity Team. One bloc is made up of re-electionist senators and ex-senators whose political loyalties are divided. Another is made up of known administration loyalists and Estrada diehards. The third is a pastiche of congressmen and political figures who want to be independent and are loath to be identified with the administration but affiliated with parties aligned with the majority coalition (Lakas, the Nationalist People's Coalition of Eduardo Cojuangco and the President's own minuscule Kampi party).

Things crystallized further when Senate President Manuel Villar turned down an invitation to join the administration slate. Villar, head of the Nacionalista Party and a leading member of the Senate Wednesday Group (composed of ex-congressmen), is in a quandary.

The UNO announced last week its first list of eight candidates, which excluded Villar and three other members of Wednesday Group: Majority Leader Francis Pangilinan and Senators Joker Arroyo and Ralph Recto.

Negotiations for the bloc to coalesce with UNO broke off when the opposition coalition humiliated the bloc with some "take it or leave it" condition that would have split it. The bloc had sought to join the opposition coalition as an independent third force. The talks ran into opposition from Estrada, UNO chair, who could not stomach taking Arroyo, who spearheaded the prosecution in the impeachment trial of Estrada. The UNO didn't even have the grace to invite the Wednesday Group as "guest" candidates, proudly believing that its line-up would sweep the election because of their perceived public backlash against an unpopular administration. The administration exploited this development by announcing that slots were open for Arroyo and Recto in the Unity ticket.

The third force movement suffered another setback when Sen. Edgardo Angara accepted President Macapagal-Arroyo's invitation to run on the Unity ticket. If Joker Arroyo was unwelcome to Estrada, Angara said, "They (UNO) don't like me there." Lakas leaders have indicated they are not keen on accepting the other half of the Wednesday Group: Villar and Pangilinan.

Angara joined the Unity ticket following the defection of former Senators Vicente Sotto III and Tessie Aquino-Oreta, from Angara's Laban ng Demokratikong Pilipino to Cojuangco's NPC, a key member of the Lakas coalition in the House of Representatives. Angara said Villar's rejection of the invitation to run on the Unity ticket meant "our third force has collapsed." He added that the Wednesday Group "may have also collapsed."

Still on breast milk

AT LARGE

Rina Jimenez-David

I SUPPOSE I SHOULDN'T BE SURPRISED THAT my column last Feb. 2, where I reprinted major portions of an article written by former INQUIRER columnist Larry Henares, prompted an immediate response from the parties involved. The Pharmaceutical and Health Care Association of the Philippines (PHAP), through lawyer Fely Aquino-Arroyo, sent a thick sheaf of paper consisting of two documents: the petition it successfully pursued in the Supreme Court for a temporary restraining order (TRO) on the implementation of the new Revised Implementing Rules and Regulations (RIRR) of the Milk Code, and its opposition to the Department of Health's urgent motion to lift the TRO.

Because PHAP's position was already clearly laid out in a letter to the editor and signed by Aquino-Arroyo (and to which Henares was reacting), I won't go too far into the details. But basically its position is that the DOH and others who participated in framing the RIRR went beyond their authority and the coverage of the Milk Code ("abuse" was the word used).

It was the infant formula marketers' contention that an "extremely small coterie" of officials within the DOH "effectively usurped the legislative mandate and prerogatives of Congress and thereby amended its enabling law," which is the Milk Code. At issue is mainly the ban on advertising of breast milk substitutes in the RIRR, which had previously only been "regulated," with advertisers required to get the clearance of an inter-agency committee before airing their ads or carrying out their promotional activities and other marketing schemes.

* * *

MY own understanding of the issue is that the RIRR was prepared precisely, as PHAP's accusation goes, to broaden the scope of advertising controls on the marketing of breast milk substitutes. This is because, when the Milk Code went into effect, infant-formula marketers sought immediately to skirt both the letter and spirit of the law by segmentizing the market for breast milk substitutes/infant formula, with some brands targeted at newborns, others as "follow-on" formulas, and others for "older babies."

I remember writing a column some years back expressing my alarm at seeing an ad for a supposedly "follow-on" formula (for babies older than six months) showing the mother cradling the infant in her arms. As a mother, I knew this sent the subliminal message that the milk was for younger babies, because you can't make a baby lie down in your arms once they're three months or older.

This perception was bolstered by a deliberate marketing ploy of some milk manufacturers to use brand names for their milk products—from breast milk substitutes to infant formula to regular milk—that were similar, if not based on the same root word. So while they were in theory marketing milk for older children, they were in effect creating awareness as well for breast milk substitutes for newborns.

Some doctors have also weighed in on the issue, saying that the state shouldn't interfere in their duty toward their patients, and that mothers deserved full information on how they were to feed their babies, and that they had the right to know that breast milk substitutes were perfectly safe alternatives to breast milk.

But if it is state policy to promote breastfeeding (and my understanding is that this is so in the Philippines), then breast milk substitutes should be considered only as the inferior alternative. In fact, I would support moves to have breast milk substitutes classified as ethical drugs, which require a doctor's prescription. A mother who chooses not to breastfeed her child should have a perfectly sound medical and health reason not to—and should have a doctor's prescription on hand every time she buys a can of formula.

* * *

WHEN I got a call from executives of Nestlé Philippines, which also manufactures and markets breast milk substitutes and milk products, I expected much the same reaction as that of Aquino-Arroyo. Mistakenly, I thought Nestlé was part of PHAP.

But when I met Noy Dyliaco and Bin Antonio of Nestlé, I was surprised to find out quite the opposite. Indeed, the Nestlé executives said the company was not part of PHAP—and therefore not a petitioner in the case—and that it basically supports the RIRR. In fact, Antonio, who is Nestlé's corporate affairs officer and ombudsman, was a member of the committee that drafted the RIRR, representing the Philippine Chamber of Food Manufacturers. The RIRR, explained Antonio, was drafted basically "to align it with the World Health Organization's Code on the marketing of breast milk substitutes, to which the Philippines is a signatory.

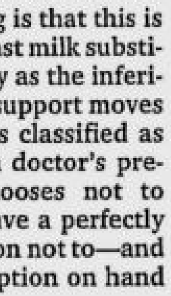
In a letter to Health Secretary Francisco Duque, D. Nandkishore, chair and CEO of Nestlé Philippines, reiterated the company's support for the RIRR, supporting the ban on advertising of infant-milk products for infants aged 0 to 12 months; supporting the prohibition on the use of a brand name for infant-milk products if it is similar to a brand name for milk for older children; and supporting the creation of an independent body to effectively control implementation of the RIRR. Nestlé, however, said it did not support the proposal to limit distribution of infant-milk products to pharmacies and drugstores.

* * *

DYLIACO was also at pains to point out that there is no basis to link the issue regarding the RIRR or the regulation of breast milk substitute marketing to the deaths of two labor leaders in Nestlé plants: Meliton Roxas in 1989 and Diosdado Fortuna in 2005, which Henares did in his article. "The last time there was a strike in the Cabuyao plant was in 2002," Dyliaco said, inferring that Fortuna's death had nothing to do with a labor dispute, much less a dispute over marketing practices.

'National Hysterical Institute'

LOOKING BACK



Ambeth R. Ocampo

FOR THE PAST 74 YEARS, THE PHILIPPINES has had an agency mandated to identify and mark historical places. This has resulted in hundreds of historical markers all over the archipelago, from Tawi-Tawi in the south to Batanes in the north where a number of markers already approved are waiting to be installed. These markers are not only reminders of historic events, but proof of the development in historical research, interpretation and thinking. Contrary to popular belief, history can also change, and this act of revisiting and revising the past is a hotly debated part of the historian's mandate.

On Jan. 24, 1973, four months after he declared martial law and began to rule by decree, Ferdinand Marcos issued Presidential Decree 105 declaring established national shrines as sacred or hallowed places and protected these and those that would be declared as shrines in the future from acts of desecration. Thus, it was forbidden to disturb the peace of these shrines by noise, excavation, or unbecoming acts (whatever that meant). Furthermore, Marcos defined fines and prison terms for those who desecrated these shrines. At the time specific mention was made of the following:

"... the birthplace of Dr. Jose Rizal in Calamba, Laguna; Talisay, Dapitan City, where the hero was exiled for four years; Fort Santiago, Manila, where he was imprisoned in 1896 prior to his execution; Talaga, Tanauan, Batangas, where Apolinario Mabini was born; Pandacan, Manila, where Mabini's house in which he died, is located; and the Aguinaldo Mansion in Kawit, Cavite, where Gen. Emilio Aguinaldo, first President of the Philippines, was born, and where Philippine Independence was solemnly proclaimed on June 12, 1898; Batan, Aklan, where the 'Code of Kalantiyaw' was promulgated in 1433; etc."

If we are to sing the Sesame Street song, "one of these things is not like the other," it is the last mentioned that has turned out to be problematic. Once a source of national pride, the Philippines Historical Committee in 1956, at the request of the Municipal Council of Batan, Aklan installed a bronze marker in the area that read:

"CODE OF KALANTIAW.

"DATU BENDAHARA KALANTIAW, THIRD CHIEF OF PANAY, BORN IN AKLAN, ESTABLISHED HIS GOVERNMENT IN THE PENINSULA OF BATANG, 'AKLAN SAKUP.' CONSIDERED THE FIRST FILIPINO LAWGIVER, HE PROMULGATED ABOUT 1433 A PENAL CODE NOW KNOWN AS CODE OF KALANTIAW CONTAINING 18 ARTICLES. DON MARCELINO ORILLA OF ZARAGOZA, SPAIN, OBTAINED THE ORIGINAL MANUSCRIPT FROM AN OLD CHIEF OF PANAY WHICH WAS LATER TRANSLATED INTO SPANISH BY RAFAEL MURVIEDO YZAMANEY."

A Kalantiaw Shrine and Museum was established in Batan, numerous streets were named after this legendary or, should we say mythical figure, and, more importantly, a state decoration, the Order of Kalantiaw, was established and conferred on retiring Supreme Court justices.

Then, in 1968, William Henry Scott proved that the Code of Kalantiaw was a forgery made in the early 20th century. As an issue of academic history and historiography, it was easy to settle. But the truth was an assault on the pride of Aklan, particularly of the municipality of Batan, and so it took over three decades for Kalantiaw to be officially declared a forgery. This happened in 2002, when the NHI Board declared it to be so. As a result of this, there was a move to close the Kalantiaw shrine, or at least, to re-tool the museum into a Museum of Aklan History.

In this example, we clearly see how history crosses over from the academic to the political. How myth has a stronger hold on the people's imagination than historical truth. Nobody even notices that the name is also a problem. The prefix "Ka" is usually a mark of pre-colonial nobility, hence this legendary datu is Ka Lantiaw. According to Tsinoys, the word *"lantiaw"* is the vulgar word for testicles.

In 2003, the NHI authorized the transfer of a historical marker for the site of the first shot of the Philippine-American War from San Juan Bridge to a little-known street corner in Silencio corner Sociego Streets, Sta. Mesa, Manila. San Juan lost not just a historical landmark but also a public holiday, celebrated each year on Feb. 4. But San Juan's loss was Manila's gain.

This was not just a case of historical revisionism but a challenge to local pride. Naturally, San Juan resisted the change and the historical marker had to be physically removed from the bridge and transferred to Santa Mesa in the dead of night to avoid a tug-of-war that would have made interesting news. There was even a suggestion to sue the NHI for "theft" of the marker. In time, the controversy dissipated but such is the reaction to new research.

While the NHI continues to undertake constant research, it is firmly rooted in its past role of commemorating the deeds of national heroes and marking historical places. The office is now in the forefront of heritage protection and often finds itself in the middle, between a wrecking ball and a heritage structure. It is consulted when names of streets and school buildings are to be changed, and in all these, I sometimes wonder if the National Historical Institute truly deserves its other name: the National Hysterical Institute.

Comments are welcome at aocampo@ateneo.edu

Wondrous anomalies

PINOY KASI

Michael L. Tan

SEVERAL TIMES EACH DAY, HE COMES OUT OF THE house and paces the street up and down, up and down, a slight smile on his face and looking like a Spanish friar with his daily prayers.

I'll call him Gil, although I wonder if I really need to protect his identity. When my parents first moved into the neighborhood in the late 1970s, he was already around, a young child who clearly had his own world. Back then people weren't as open about autism and everyone kept a polite silence about him. He was there, yet not quite there.

Then a few years ago, we got an invitation to attend Gil's first art exhibit. They were fine paintings and we bought one, showing Roman aqueducts, which, his sister explained, Gil had seen once in a photograph.

That was the first time we talked about Gil, but never did the word "autism" come around.

Last month, the INQUIRER devoted several front-page articles to autism, excellent contributions toward helping the public understand this intriguing condition or, rather, spectrum of conditions.

With so much already written about autism, I wanted to draw the readers' attention to a larger picture of children and adults living with one of many possible genetic "anomalies." I use quotation marks here because I feel uncomfortable with the term, but I prefer it to "disorders" or even "diseases."

Malformations

There are entire books devoted to these conditions. One textbook, "Smith's Recognizable Patterns of Human Malformation," has gone through six editions and, as the title suggests, focuses on the conditions with visible manifestations. It's all in there, from cleft palates to the "happy puppet syndrome," so called because those having it have a "puppet-like" gait and break out in paroxysms of laughter. There's a whole chapter on osteochondrodysplasias, conditions affecting the bones and joints which translate into what lay people call, generically, "dwarfs."

It's a difficult book to go through, with photographs to illustrate the different syndromes. Many are named after the medical scientists who first discovered the conditions, or who devoted their lives to researching the anomaly. For example, there's Down's syndrome (the old term was "Mongoloidism," now considered politically incorrect) and Hutchinson-Gilford syndrome (also known as progeria, involving premature aging).

The "anomalies" include the sexes, reminding us that even at the biological level, there's more to the sexes than females with XX chromosomes and males with XY chromosomes. Rather, there are all kinds of intersex categories with chromosomal anomalies like XXY, XXXY, XXXXY, XXXX, XXXXX, usually resulting in underdeveloped or ambiguous reproductive organs together with other physical malformations.

Many of the congenital anomalies seem rare—one in several thousand births, for example—but when you think of the total population in a country, the numbers end up quite high. In the Philippines, for example, if we have about 0.5 percent of the population belonging to intersex categories, which means more than 400,000 people.

'Diperensiya'

I've written in the past about how the Spanish *"diferencia,"* which means "difference" became *"diperensiya"* in Filipino, to mean a defect. We're uneasy about people who don't quite fit into the majority in terms of behavior—or appearance. We see this in the way people are given nicknames referring to their *"diperensiya,"* from Pandak (stunted) and Duling (cross-eyed) to Negro and Tisoy or Tisay for the skin color.

If such superficial differences merit a taunting nickname, imagine the stigma that comes with more dramatic genetically based *"diperensiya."* Without access to medical information, it's not surprising that people have developed all kinds of folk explanations for these conditions, including attributions to *"paglilihi,"* a pregnant woman fixated on particular foods, objects, or people, whose appearance is then said to be transferred to the fetus.

We fear the unknown, so children with congenital anomalies sometimes end up neglected, even maltreated, gawked at, or displayed in circuses.

On the other hand, we do see more positive responses, where the child is seen as a "blessing," even as someone who brings good luck. The term "special child," brought in from the West, was easily picked up in the way it converged with the notion of a "blessing."

James Paget, a brilliant English surgeon and pathologist, wrote in 1882 about the genetic anomalies: "Not one of them is without meaning; not one that might not become the beginning of excellent knowledge, if only we could answer the question: Why is it rare? Or being rare, why did it in this instance happen?"

From a detached scientific perspective, these "anomalies" are random events that happen every day, all over the world, in all species of life. There have been many advances as we try to decipher the reasons such anomalies occur. Autism, for example, is now seen as a "spectrum disorder" that includes many "high-functioning" people who might even be teaching in universities and writing books.

Some conditions are now easily remedied, such as the cleft palate. I am amazed at how a fairly simple operation can bring such a dramatic change in a person's life, yet, extreme poverty still prevents so many Filipinos from benefiting from the harelip operations.

Most importantly, people with "anomalies" find ways to help themselves. There are now associations of intersex people, of people with autism. The "little people" or dwarfs, formerly the object of ridicule, have carved out of their own niche (I think of Hobbitt House on Mabini Street, now completely managed by a group of little people).

With time, we will begin to look at "anomalies" as a statistical term, referring to events that don't occur too often but which are still part of the variation to be expected in nature. And the people—they wouldn't be thought of as anomalies. Already, we marvel when we're allowed to peek into the worlds of the autistic. Sometimes the experience makes us wonder if perhaps we are the ones who are handicapped, not being able to see as they do. Paradoxically then, the anomalies become mirrors to humanity, allowing us to see more of us.

Out in nature, life is often short for those born with anomalies. Only humans have found ways to allow the "anomalies," including those whose conditions pose serious handicaps to become part of the family, of society, even living to a ripe old age, cared for and loved. Our wondrous anomalies are a mirror to humanity, and the way we care for them defines that humanity.

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Queries for Ombudsman

MERCEDITAS GUTIERREZ IS INTELLIGENT, only that she is unable to distinguish right from wrong. She single-handedly convicted Iloilo Gov. Niel D. Tupas Sr., and SP (Sangguniang Panlalawigan) members Domingo Oso Jr. and Cecilia Capodosa of grave misconduct, and ordered them immediately kicked out of service. She kept the decision (dated Dec. 4, 2006) a top secret but immediately executory upon receipt by Interior Secretary Ronaldo Puno, who in turn "served" and implemented it on Jan. 15—the very day and the first time that Tupas et al. came to know of it.

Among the first persons to be shocked was Msgr. Meliton Oso, the complainant himself. "Why was I not furnished a copy of the decision? The complaint was filed and processed in Cebu, how come it was the Ombudsman herself and not her deputy in Cebu who made the decision?" he asked. When the cleric called up the deputy ombudsman in Cebu to ask for the original copy, he heard her muttering in surprise: *"Hindi ko alam 'yan, ah."*

In the morning of Jan. 16, two lawyers of Tupas flew to Cebu to file a petition for certiorari with the Court of Appeals, but without the original copies of the decision, their pleadings were but a scrap of paper. They went to the Office of the Deputy Ombudsman to authenticate their photo copies, but the latter could not certify them because it had no original in its file.

The Office of the Ombudsman finally sent the original copies to Cebu past office hours of Jan. 16, so Tupas' counsels were able to file the petition for certiorari only at 10 a.m. of Jan 17.

In the meantime, 300 fully armed hoodlums in police ranger uniforms, backed with an armored personnel carrier, fire trucks and four snipers on the ground raided the Iloilo provincial capitol to flush out Tupas. The armed hoodlums smashed four panels of the glass door with a sledge hammer, roughed up unarmed civilians, including four children of Tupas, and terrorized civilians and reporters by training their assault rifles and barking threats at them.

Though it ended "well" without bloodshed, more questions beg for answers. Why did Gutierrez ignore established jurisprudence—notably the ruling in Ombudsman v. Pendatun Laja et al. that its decision of dismissal or suspension of more than one month is final and executory only after 10 days when the respondent fails to file a motion for reconsideration or appeal; that the timely filing of a motion for reconsideration or appeal stays the execution of the penalties? Gutierrez cannot plead ignorance; no less than the Ombudsman herself is the petitioner here and the Court issued the decision only on May 22, 2006.

Why did Gutierrez rule that her decision was immediately executory "upon receipt" by the DILG? Why were Tupas et al. not served the original copies of the decisions, a vital element in determining the 10-day period to file a motion for reconsideration or the filing of an appeal or petition for certiorari?

—PET MELLIZA,
petmelliza@hotmail.com

IF you have any complaints, grievances or suggestions about the treatment of news and photos by the Inquirer, you may write to the Readers' Advocate, Philippine Daily Inquirer, Chino Roces Avenue, corner Yague and Mascardo Streets, City of Makati or send a fax to Nos. 897-4793, 897-4794, or e-mail readersadvocate@inquirer.com.ph

Writers of letters to the editor are requested to include their complete address and telephone or pager number or e-mail address for verification purposes. The Inquirer will not publish any letter unless such information is supplied.

LETTERS
PHILIPPINE DAILY INQUIRER

Let's restore integrity of Philpost

AS A VICTIM OF MAIL PILFERAGE, I pointed out that the problem "deserves an investigation by the Office of the Postmaster General." (INQUIRER, 7/29/07) There was no response from that office.

Hence, I join Sr. Pilar Verzosa, RGS of the Good Shepherd Sisters, Rino M. Basilio and other victims in calling Postmaster General Hector Villanueva to restore the integrity of the Philippine mailing system.

—NICASIO G. VALDERRAMA, retired career ambassador, 2 Scouter Ojeda St., Barangay Paligsahan, Quezon City 1103

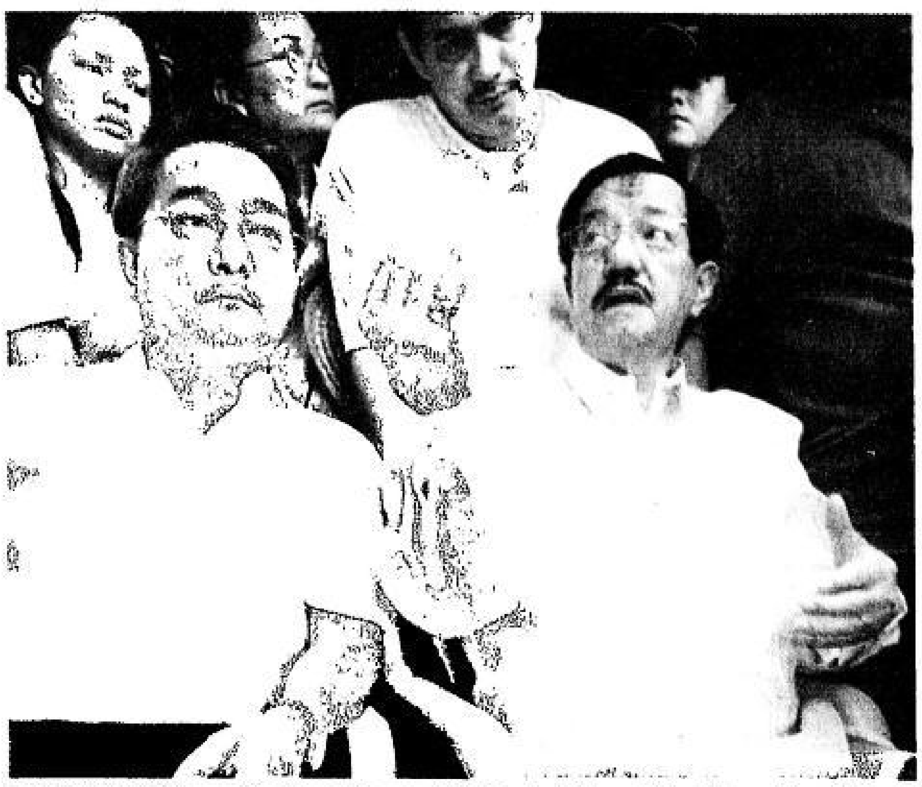
Give 'coco levy dividends' to farmers

I READ FROM THE JAN. 20 ISSUE OF the INQUIRER that the Presidential Commission on Good Government "has approved a resolution that will allow the Coconut Industry Investment Fund (CIIP) to use the accumulated dividends from its 27 percent stake in San Miguel Corp."

The news story also reported that "the San Miguel dividends, estimated to be worth P1.9 million, were acquired with funds from the forced tax that the late Ferdinand Marcos imposed on coconut farmers between 1973 and 1982."

Being a small coconut farmer myself, and an unwilling victim of the notorious coconut levy, I urged the PCGG to apportion the P1.9-million dividends among the shareholders of the 14 holding companies being managed by six oil mills. To quote INQUIRER columnist Juan L. Mercado, "What was stolen from (coconut) farmers must be returned." (INQUIRER, 1/23/07)

—CRISOSTOMO B. VILAR,
vice mayor, Pagsanjan, Laguna



SUSPENDED Pasay City Mayor Peewee Trinidad, right, and Vice Mayor Tony Calixto

Filipinos are not dumb

LOCAL PUBLIC OFFICIALS HAVE BEEN suspended and removed from office on the Ombudsman's order, with the Department of the Interior and Local Government serving as the implementor. Some officials were lucky enough to be able to get a TRO (temporary restraining order). But others weren't. However, the fact remains that all of them are made to suffer some forms of inconvenience in the process.

Even the Commission on Human Rights has decried the sudden suspensions and dismissals which, apparently, were ordered by the Ombudsman and implemented by the DILG with the previous knowledge and approval of Malacañang and the Department of Justice. It is difficult to imagine that a Cabinet member like Interior Secretary Ronaldo Puno would act on a very important matter without previous consultation with the Palace.

But not all Filipinos are as dumb as the administration would like to believe.

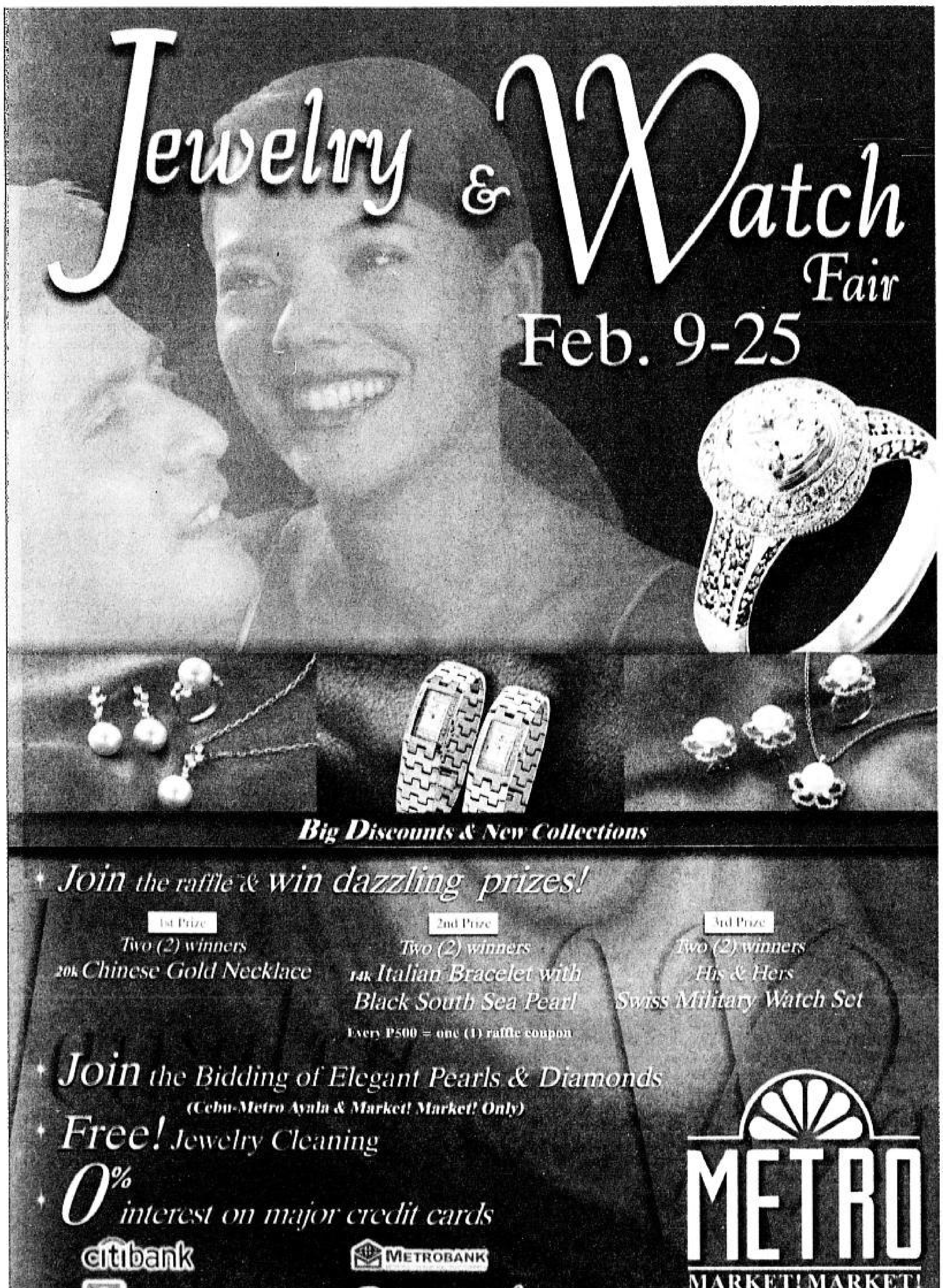
—ARTURO M. TOPACIO JR.,
spokesman, Office of Sen. Fred Lim,
Philippine Senate, Pasay City

Leave the mountains alone

IN REFERENCE TO THE CALL FOR more housing projects to address the current housing crisis, may I say some words of caution for our decision-makers, in government and in the private sector alike: Leave the mountains alone.

Our mountains are sources of cheap and potable water. Many of them are already denuded. Landslides and the poisoning of our groundwater are disasters which are now happening. Do we need to have more?

—DAN PASIA,
Reforms for a Cleaner and Greener
Philippines, 962 Tolentino St.,
Sampaloc, Manila



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Nails on Senate coffin

INQUIRER.NET VOICES

THEY WANTED THE SENATE dead. Now they're running for seats in the same embattled chamber they had wished to be abolished. The motives behind the administration's so-called Team Unity are patently questionable, if not downright deranged.

Only vultures and similar predators seek the stench of death. As in the late Kevin Carter's Pulitzer Prize-winning picture, where an emaciated Sudanese child struggles to get to a feeding center while a fat vulture waits patiently in the background for the child-prey to finally fall. The vulture can smell death and can hardly wait for a piece of meat.

These politicians are like bombers given the task of building a house, a house of glass at that. They can't wait to blow the house down. Or, doctors declaring the patient dead even before it can complain about his ailment.

These presidential factotums are running for election to drive the nails on the Senate's coffin, the Senate being one of the few remaining parts of our democratic system that run against their and their boss' dictatorial interests. Indeed, a vote for any of these personalities is a vote for unity: unity in greed, in further spreading mayhem and madness, and in ensuring that their boss who pretends to be in control of a crisis-embedded nation will stay in power till kingdom come.

But if they think they can confuse the Filipinos, they will be united in their shock that not a word from any of them or their spin doctors will ever be deemed credible, just like the boss they serve.

The opposition candidates, despite their faults, at least know they're running for election to preserve the role of the Senate in keeping the balance of power, and not to make minced meat of the Senate as this so-called Team Unity bets will do once the smoke of elections has settled.—**Dennis Torrecampo, Fairfax, Virginia (via e-mail)**

* * *

"Palace firm on Ebdane appointment as defense chief," the story said.

Why am I not surprised? Why is Gloria Macapagal-Arroyo really pushing for his appointment? Why is Ebdane offering the Army's trucks to carry election materials? Does he not trust the Commission on Elections?

In this connection, the P940 million for training public school teachers is suspect. Any fund appropriation before the elections will surely disappear and never surface again, just like the fertilizer fund.—**Alfonso Demayo, Vancouver, B.C., Canada (via e-mail)**

* * *

I REALLY WISH the Catholic Bishops' Conference of the Philippines (CBCP) and other religious leaders will not interfere in Philippine politics. They should let the politicians run the government. If they want to participate in our politics, they should pay taxes or, better yet, quit as priests and run for elective positions.

I wish the media, especially the INQUIRER, will stop encouraging religious groups to meddle in government affairs by publishing every opinion they express. Average Filipinos don't care what the CBCP and other religious groups (i.e., El Shaddai, Jesus Is Lord, etc.) think about the way government is run.

Why doesn't the media remind the CBCP of the importance of the separation of Church and State? Are they afraid of these groups? Are they afraid to incur the wrath of these so called "decent priests"? Afraid that if they question the priest's motives, their newspapers will be attacked and labeled as "immoral"?

The issues from these religious groups do not belong on the front page, especially when what the Church is saying makes no sense.—**Alberto Felix, San Diego, California (via e-mail)**

* * *

I am sick and tired of seeing and reading these old *trapos* still wanting to be in the Senate. Filipinos should elect new, fresh and creative people, not these destructive old traditional politicians. Otherwise, let's get rid of the Senate! It would just be a waste if taxpayers' money.—**Franklin Rebutoc, Calgary, Alberta, Canada (via e-mail)**

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179 areas listed Comelec, PNP hot spots

POLICE AND ELECTION OFFICIALS HAVE started marking as hot spots areas in the country where election violence was likely to mar balloting in May and came up with a list of 179 towns and cities in two regions so far—Southern Tagalog and Western Visayas.

The Philippine National Police said 111 towns in the Southern Tagalog region were under close watch for possible election violence.

Florentino Tuazon Jr., election commissioner, said he was sure there would be peaceful elections in the region, however.

Tuazon is in charge of elections in Southern Tagalog and Central Luzon.

"There are no known intense political rivalries in these areas," he said after meeting with police officials on preparations for the May elections.

But he said some areas, where communist guerrillas operate, are of immediate concern.

A PNP report said 80 towns, including six cities, are hot spots in Cavite, Laguna, Batangas, Rizal and Quezon (Calabarzon).

Police listed 27 election-related cases of violence, including assassinations, in these areas in the May 2004 elections.

Chief Supt. Nicasio Radovan Jr., Calabarzon police chief, said police were keeping a close watch of private armed groups with ties to local politicians.

Police in the two Mindoro provinces—Occidental and Oriental—listed 31 towns as hot spots.

Eight of these towns are in Occidental Mindoro, where communist guerrillas are believed to be based in the region.

Election official Tuazon said since Jan. 14, candidates are prohibited from employing armed bodyguards.

"This can be used as ground for disqualification of any candidate," he said.

In Western Visayas, the Comelec identified 68 towns and cities as areas of concern.

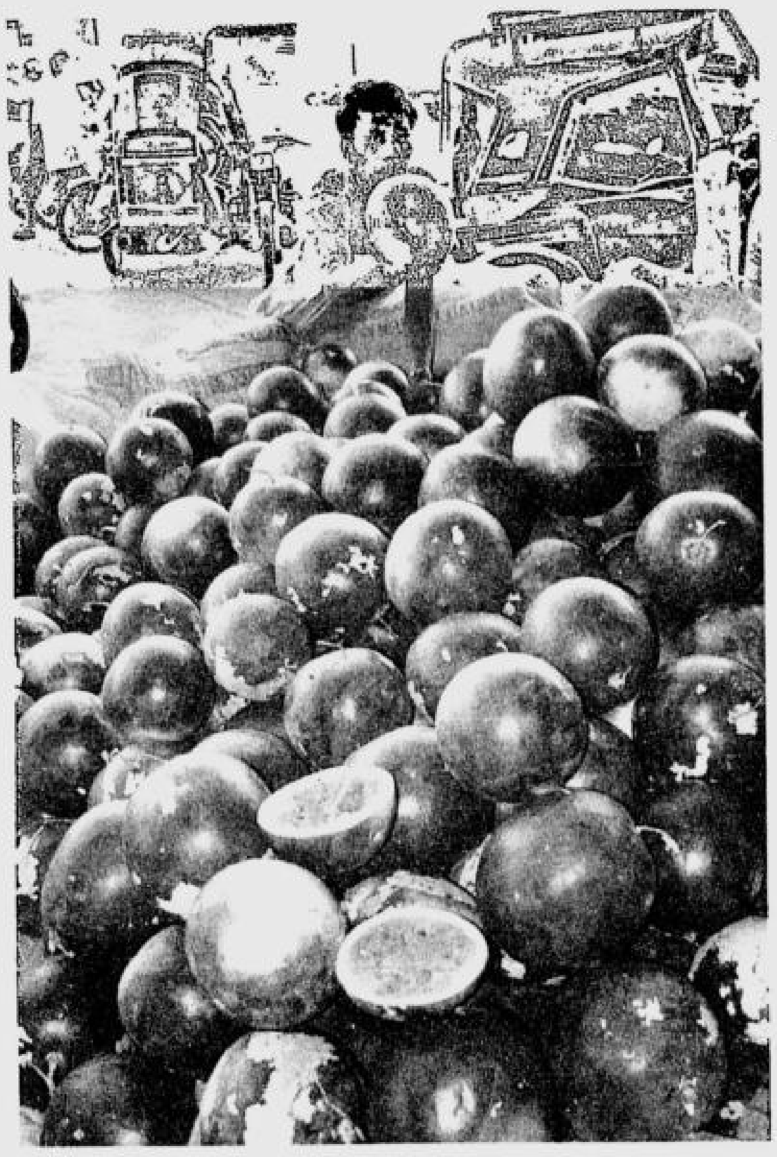
Renato Magbutay, Comelec regional supervisor, said the list was based on a PNP report.

At least 29 of the areas were in Negros Occidental; 21, Iloilo; nine, Capiz; seven, Antique.

Magbutay said the list would be validated at regular meetings of the Comelec, PNP and Armed Forces of the Philippines as the elections draw near.

The town of Tapaz, Capiz made it to the list following the Dec. 30 killing of Vice Mayor Victor Gardose and three others there.

Western Visayas has about 3.6 million voters as of the May 2004 elections, fourth with the most voters. Central Luzon, Southern Tagalog and Metro Manila are the top three in terms of voter population. *Marlon Ramos, Inquirer Southern Luzon and Nestor Burgos, Inquirer Visayas*



A VENDOR sells watermelons in Dagupan City, his basic concern being to earn a living for the day as the heat of the political season in Pangasinan starts making itself felt. RAY ZAMBRANO/INQUIRER NORTHERN LUZON

No GMA bet emerging in Pangasinan polls

DAGUPAN CITY—WHO WILL BE the administration's gubernatorial candidate in Pangasinan?

This may be the first problem that the administration coalition's arbitration panel will have to resolve in the province as soon as it is formed.

To date, three gubernatorial aspirants—two of them belonging to Lakas-CMD and the other belonging to Kampi—remained in a standoff on who will be the administration's official candidate.

These are Vice Gov. Oscar Lambino and outgoing Gov. Victor Agbayani's wife, Dr. Jamie Eloise Agbayani, who both belong to Lakas-CMD, and Pangasinan Rep. Amado Espino Jr., who belongs to Kampi.

Local political analysts and radio commentators said it is crucial for the administration to preserve political unity in the province to ensure the victory of its senatorial candidates in this vote-rich province.

Commission on Elections records showed Pangasinan has 1.2 million voters in 2004, almost 60 percent of the voting population in the Ilocos.

Espino told reporters here on Tuesday that he had tried to talk Governor Agbayani to resolve the impasse.

"I told him to run for representative in the second district and Mrs. Agbayani will be my vice governor. That was in December and I have yet to be informed of his decision," Espino said.

But even before Agbayani could decide, the Nationalist People's Coalition and Kampi announced that it was fielding Espino as its official gubernatorial candidate.

"I don't know. I don't really know," Espino said when asked if the formation of an arbitration panel will affect his candidacy.

But businessman Rosendo So, NPC-Kampi regional coordinator, said Espino will remain as their candidate.

"He has been endorsed by NPC and Kampi, which will have seats in the [arbitration] panel. So, why should we worry?" So said.

He said Espino was so far the only member of the administration coalition who has openly declared his gubernatorial bid.

Another aspirant, National Irrigation Administration chief Arturo Lomibao has also announced that he was running for Pangasinan governor but it was not clear under what party he will run.

In Ilocos Sur, Gov. Luis "Chavit" Singson and his cousin, Rep. Eric Singson, agreed to support common candidates in the province as the governor prepares to leave his post to run for senator under the administration coalition.

"This is our commitment and I expect no violators," Governor Singson told the province's mayors on Sunday.

He said the candidates will come from Lakas-CMD, Liberal Party (Atienza wing), Kampi and the local party Bileg.

The local coalition had agreed to support the reelection of Representative Singson and 16 incumbent mayors.

The governor said a five-member arbitration committee composed of provincial board members under the coalition will resolve the problem in the choice of candidates in seven towns.

Among the gubernatorial aspirants in the ticket are Governor Singson's younger brother, Board Member Jeremias Singson, and Vice Gov. Deogracias Victor Savellano.

The local opposition is fielding former Board Member Efren Rafanan in the gubernatorial race, reports said. *Gabriel Cardinoza and Leoncio Balbin Jr., Inquirer Northern Luzon*

Soldiers' homes among those to be demolished

ZAMBOANGA CITY—AT LEAST 40 houses owned by soldiers assigned to various parts of Mindanao would be demolished as the Western Mindanao Command (Westmincom) evicts squatters in a portion of the military compound here.

Since the start of the operation two weeks ago, Westmincom operatives have already demolished 25 houses, mostly owned by civilians.

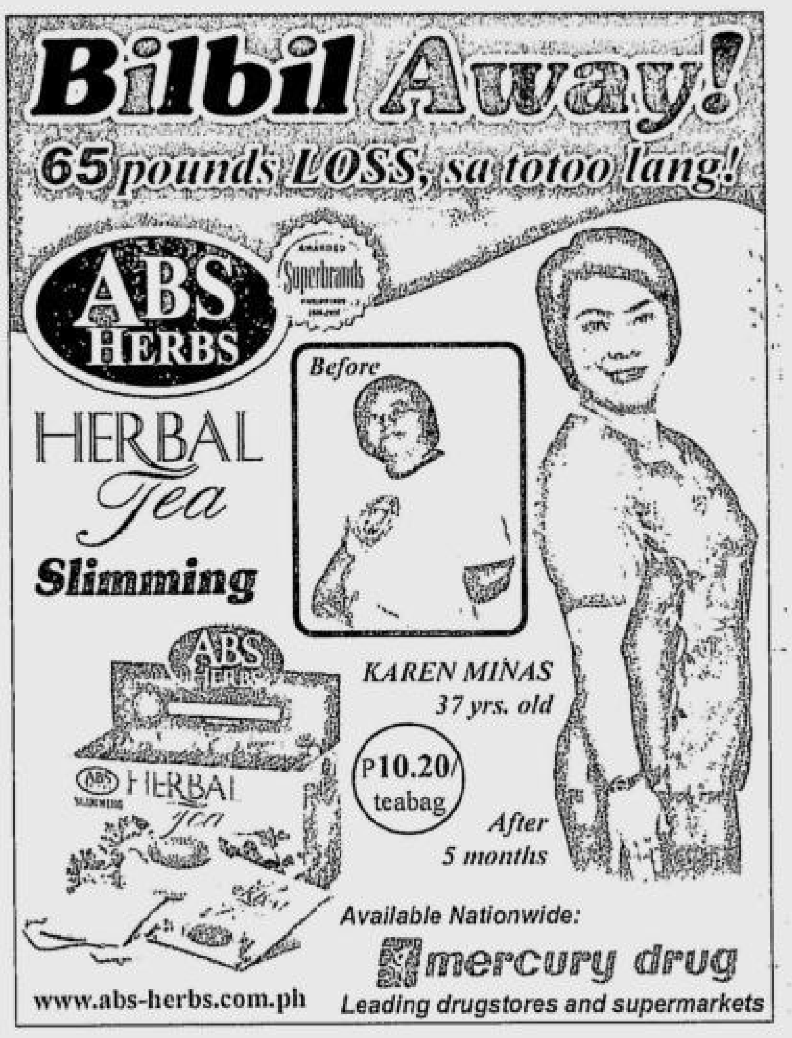
One of those whose house would be removed is the family of Geronimo (not his real name), a soldier assigned in Central Mindanao.

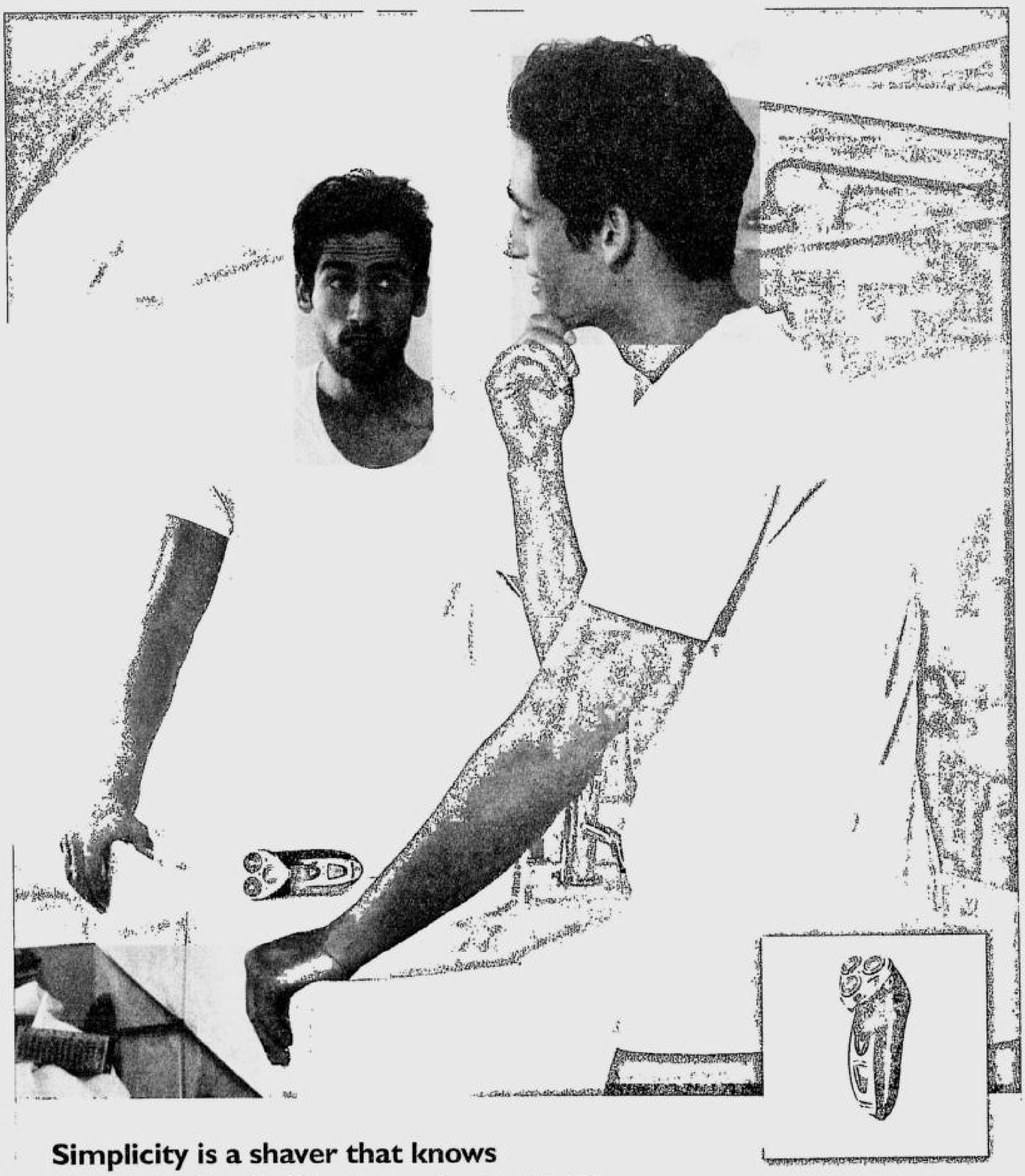
Geronimo said he went home last week from his assignment only to discover that some of his neighbors' houses had already been flattened.

Like 39 other soldiers, Geronimo put up his house at a vacant lot at the back of Camp Don Basilio Navarro, the Westmincom headquarters.

"I am deeply bothered by this event. I am worrying that the next time I come home, I would not see my house anymore," Geronimo said.

Evangeline Eliar, president of the Hermosa Kabalikat at Pagkakaisa Homeowners Association Phase 2, said some 300 families would be evicted. *Julie S. Alipala, Inquirer Mindanao*





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Ecija vice gov program brings 180,000 closer to docs, nurses

By Anselmo Roque
Inquirer Central Luzon

VICE GOV. Mariano Cristino Joson of Nueva Ecija is greeted by some of the orphans whom he supports through medical missions and free parties. The medical missions have brought health services to more than 100,000 residents of the province since they started two years ago. ANSELMO ROQUE/INQUIRER NORTHERN LUZON

PALAYAN CITY—FOR TWO YEARS now, Vice Gov. Mariano Cristino Joson is seen regularly with doctors, nurses, dentists and a mobile health clinic that has delivered medical and dental services to thousands of Nueva Ecija residents, including those in remote villages.

The health unit, bannered by a vehicle with a laboratory and a facility for minor surgeries, is composed of a staff of at least 32 medical, dental, and eye doctors, nurses, and technicians.

Volunteer nursing students also join the unit to assist in dispensing medical and dental service to the patients.

A regular staff schedules and makes the proper coordination and announcement where and when the unit will conduct the medical and dental mission in any of the 27 towns and cities of Nueva Ecija.

Conducted on a daily basis, the unit also goes out, when necessary, on weekends or special days.

Silent pain

"There are many poor residents out there who keep their health problem and pain in silence because of lack of resources to go to medical and dental clinics or see a doctor," said Joson, who personally supervises the medical-dental mission.

"We come to their places to help ease their pain free of charge," he added.

Joson initiated the project in support of the health program in the province, which is among the major concerns of Gov. Tomas Joson III, the vice governor's elder brother.

The governor, under his health program, gives attention to the poor in the province that includes lactating children, teenagers, adults, and the elderly.

The younger Joson said the mobile clinic has equipment for X-ray, ECG, and ultrasound examinations, laboratory for urine, cholesterol, blood tests and equipment for testing, dental operations and a facility for eye examination.

Minor surgeries

Inside the vehicle is an operating table for minor surgeries.

Patients are given the appropriate medicine for free. Also provided are free pairs of eyeglasses for those who may need them.

Those needing further medical attention are referred to the provincial government hospitals, the vice governor said, and are also given adequate assistance.

Started in September 2005, the clinic has served a total of 180,279 Nueva Ecija residents as of December 2006.

The clinic is now on its new round of going to the different clustered barangays in the different towns and cities of the province. One report obtained by the INQUIRER indicated that, for three days of service in one town alone, which is San Leonardo, Nueva Ecija, a total of 23,961 people were given free medical services.

The services covered 17,741 medical cases, 3,827 dental cases, 647 cases for ECG and 554 cases for X-ray examinations, 818 minor surgery cases, 196 cases of circumcision, and 504 cases of laboratory tests.

Corollary to the services of the mobile health clinic, anti-rabies vaccinations are carried out by veterinary doctors and technicians on dogs brought in by the residents.

Another source of joy

For orphans and disabled children, the disadvantaged women, and a number of other children of poor families, Joson is also carrying out a project to bring joy and happiness to them by taking them "to a world of make-believe." For two seasons now, in time for the Christmas celebration, he brought them cheers for a day by converting the provincial center in the first season into "fantasy land" and, then in the second, into "animal-landia."

They were treated to presentations by popular TV-movie actors and actresses and given food and gifts.

He donates his salary for the orphanages in Nueva Ecija.

"Theirs is an unhappy life. We have to shower them with love, attention and care," Joson said.

Gunmen abduct former martial law detainee

TARLAC CITY—A FORMER POLITICAL detainee remains missing after three men abducted him inside a subdivision here on Tuesday.

Sam Clemente, 54, was riding his motorcycle near the gate of the Capitol Gardens Subdivision here when his path was blocked by a green Mitsubishi L300 van on Tuesday noon, according to his older brother, Napoleon Clemente, 59.

Three men, one of them wearing a pair of military fatigue shorts, alighted from the van and told Sam they were policemen and that he was under arrest.

Napoleon said one of the suspects poked a gun at his brother's side while another handcuffed him.

The suspects forced Sam into the van. One of them then drove away using the victim's motorcycle.

Napoleon said the subdivision's security guard and several tricycle drivers awaiting passengers at that time saw the abduction and heard the suspects identify themselves as policemen.

Hours before he was abducted, Sam met with his lawyer to get an update on a case he filed against a bank seeking to foreclose a parcel of land that he owned.

When Sam failed to return home that night, his wife, Elnora, began to send text messages to members of the Clemente family inquiring if they knew his whereabouts.

Napoleon, a publisher of a community paper in Tarlac City, said the family went the rounds of police stations in the city, including Camp Macabulos, the provincial police headquarters, but failed to find Sam.

He said the family suspects the military to be behind the abduction.

"Who has the capability to abduct a person in broad daylight and to deploy men to observe our house but the military?" he asked.

He said a day after his younger brother was abducted, intelligence agents pretending to be vendors swarmed their place. One took photographs of their house while ostensibly trying to sell them a camera.

Sam, a political science graduate of the Far Eastern University, has two children.

In 1972, the year the late strongman Ferdinand Marcos declared martial law, Sam was arrested with thousands of political activists and Marcos critics. He was detained in Baguio City for three months and later transferred to Camp Olivas in Pampanga. He was released in December that year.

Napoleon said Sam was active as Tarlac coordinator of the political party Partido ng Bayan when it fielded senatorial candidates in the 1988 elections.

"Yes, he helped organize symposiums and forums, but was that illegal?" Napoleon said.

"If he's guilty of a crime, then charge him. We will fight it out. But is there justice when a person disappears in broad daylight as payment for his political beliefs 30 years ago?" he added.

But Elnora, 51, denied her husband was an active member of Bayan Muna or any other militant organization.

"He had been too preoccupied with our small business that it was impossible for him to join political activities anymore," she said.

A few years back, Sam's family put up an Internet and photocopying business in Baguio City. *Russell Arador, Inquirer Central Luzon*

ROUNDUP

DepEd exec shot, wounded

COTABATO CITY—The No. 3 man in the regional office of the Department of Education (DepEd) in Central Mindanao was critically wounded when he was attacked by an unidentified gunman on Tuesday. Supt. Paniares Adap, city police director, said Benhur Abdulkarim, 31, DepEd 12 administrative officer, was on his way home when shot by the suspect using a .45 cal. pistol. Bystanders immediately rushed the victim to a nearby hospital for treatment of a gunshot wound that pierced his left chest, he said. Adap said his men are still trying to determine the motive behind the shooting, including the angle of a possible power struggle or personal grudge. *Charlie Señase, Inquirer Mindanao*

Fisherman, son missing

MALITA, Davao del Sur—A fisherman and his 24-year-old son went missing while they were fishing here a week ago, police said Wednesday. As of Wednesday, the search for Jose Salve, 59, and his son Joel, residents of Barangay Sabang, has not yielded positive results. Police said huge waves could have pushed the two fishermen's banca to another direction or, their banca might have capsized. "We will just pray they are still alive," Gov. Benjamin Bautista, who ordered an intensive search and rescue, said.
Eldie Aguirre, Inquirer Mindanao

Search for 10 fishermen on

LUCENA CITY—At least 10 fishermen from Quezon province were declared missing and feared dead after their fishing vessels were smashed by strong winds and big waves, police said Tuesday. A report that reached the Quezon police provincial headquarters here at Camp Nakar, said fishing boat FV Ryzel, piloted by a certain Rogelio Cabangon and with eight crewmen, left the port of Atimonan town last Jan. 28 and sailed to the Pacific Ocean off Polillo Island. According to Salustranco Luna, the lone survivor, strong winds and huge waves smashed their boats while they were fishing in the seas near the island of Malagunuan in Burdeos town in Polillo Island. The survivor was rescued by fishermen in the area on Feb. 1. He reported the incident to the Infanta police station. In another report, two fishermen from the coastal town of Agdangan, which is along the Tayabas Bay in the Bondoc Peninsula area, were also reported missing since Feb. 1. The two missing persons were last seen in Tayabas Bay. *Delfin Mallari Jr., Inquirer Southern Luzon*

Boy, 8, killed by uncle

BALANGA CITY—An eight-year-old boy was hacked and killed by his uncle in Orani, Bataan on Monday, police said. Insp. Antonio Apan, Orani police chief, said the victim, Prince Vincent Calderon, was playing with his friends outside their house in Barangay Maria Fe on Monday afternoon when his uncle, Ronaldo Calderon, 27, summoned him. Apan said once the boy was inside the house, Calderon hacked him in different parts of the body. Prince Vincent, a Grade 1 pupil at the Orani South Elementary School, died from 18 hack wounds, police said. Apan said Calderon was arrested on Tuesday morning while walking aimlessly in Dinalupihan town. Apan said Calderon, when confronted by investigators and his relatives, could not explain why he killed his nephew. Police said the suspect would be taken to the Mariveles Center for Mental Health so he could undergo psychiatric tests. *Greg Refraccion, Inquirer Central Luzon*

Scout Ranger killed in clash

CEBU CITY—A team leader of the 1st Scout Ranger Battalion of the Army's Special Operations Command in Bohol was killed while two others were injured in an encounter with communist rebels shortly before noon on Saturday in Sitio Candales, Barangay Sta. Cruz, Batuan town. The Batuan police identified the fatality as SSgt. Sulpicio de Facto and the injured as Cpl. Dennis Hibanada, the team's lead scout, and Joelito Jamil, a civilian guide who is also a former rebel. SPO1 Francisco Alimpolos, Batuan police investigator, said the seven-man team of the Scout Rangers was on patrol in Sitio Candales, 11 km from the town proper, when they chanced upon the rebels at around 11 a.m. Lt. Col. Jefferson Omandam, spokesperson of the AFP Central Command, said the rebels also suffered casualties based on the account of the injured soldier, but they carried their comrades' bodies when they retreated from the area after the 15-minutes encounter. *Jhunnex Napallacan, Inquirer Visayas*

G. Navasero; 62

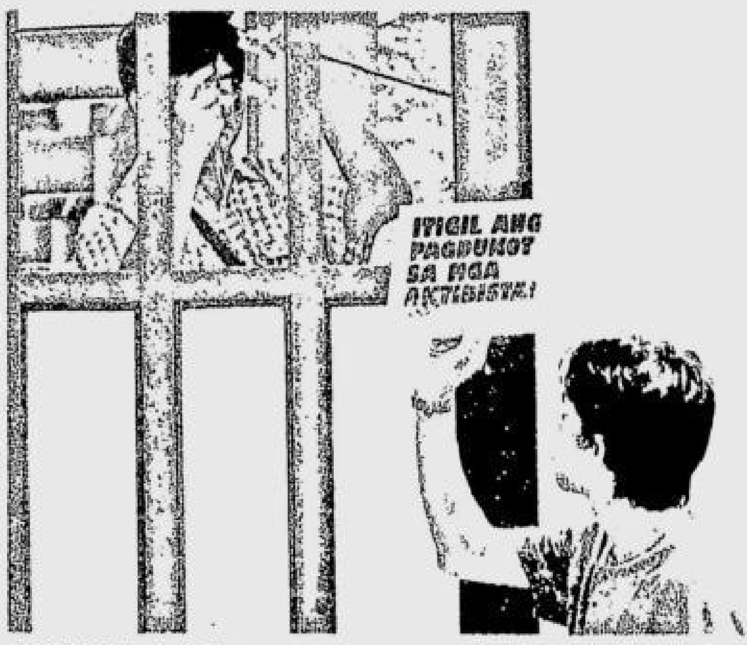
GARY Navasero of Los Baños, Laguna, owner of GaryDel Dried Flowers and Bonsai, died on Feb. 5 at the age of 62. He is survived by his wife, Delia Sales of Quezon, son GaryDel and daughter-in-law April Jimenez, daughters Isa, Teresa, Grace, Maan and son Manuel. Grandchildren Marinie and Jasmine, brothers Victor Jr. (deceased), Hector, Nestor, Ador, Ding and sister Mandy Navasero. Gary's body lies at the Church Among the Palms inside the University of the Philippines at Los Baños campus in College, Laguna. Burial will be on Saturday, Feb. 10 after the 10 a.m. service at the Los Baños Cemetery.

PRAYER

ARNOLD ALMACEN/INQUIRER VISAYAS

A vendor of rosaries waits for devotees at the Jaro Cathedral of Nuestra Sra. De La Candelaria, hoping to sell the religious items as tourists flock to the site in celebration of one of Iloilo City's fiestas, the feast of the Our Lady of Candles.

Rebs own up killing of ex-Army exec



A MEMBER of a leftist group tries to prevent his picture being taken during a rally at Camp Aguinaldo in Quezon City. The killings of leftists continue and communist guerrillas are retaliating. RAFFY LERMA

CITY OF SAN FERNANDO—Communist rebels in Pampanga on Thursday claimed responsibility for the killing on Wednesday of a retired Army colonel in Mexico town whom they alleged to have helped the military in its anti-insurgency campaign.

Gabriel Soliman, spokesperson of the Rebolusyonaryong Hukbong Bayan (RHB), confirmed the "revolutionary punishment" rendered on retired Col. Wilfredo Munar, 61.

Police said Munar was walking with his three-year-old grandson near their house in St. Joseph's Subdivision in Barangay San Antonio, Mexico, at about 8:30 a.m. when a group of men shot him several times. Munar died instantly while his grandson was not hurt.

"Munar created an intelligence network and actively helped the 69th Infantry Battalion in dismantling people's revolutionary organizations within the guerrilla zones of the RHB," Soliman said in a statement delivered to the INQUIRER.

Soliman denied reports that Munar's killing was related to the graft case that the retired Army official filed against Mexico Mayor Teddy Tumang and 10 councilors last year.

"Our punishment and the graft case are not in any way related," Soliman said in a text message later.

Col. Edison Caga, 69th IB commander, has denied in a phone interview that his command used Munar for intelligence operations against the rebels and residents.

Last year, Munar and Romeo Sinamban charged Tumang and local officials with graft citing alleged anomalies in the demolition of the municipal building and in the awarding of the contract for the construction of a new town hall.

Tumang and the officials denied the accusations. They said they did not violate any law and that there was no waste of public funds in the town hall's renovation.

The mayor said although Munar was his critic, he was thankful that the retired Army officer had filed a case against him so he could defend himself in court "fair and square." *Tonette Orejas and Jun Malig, Inquirer Central Luzon*

Senate raps Gonzalez, Puno over Iloilo assault

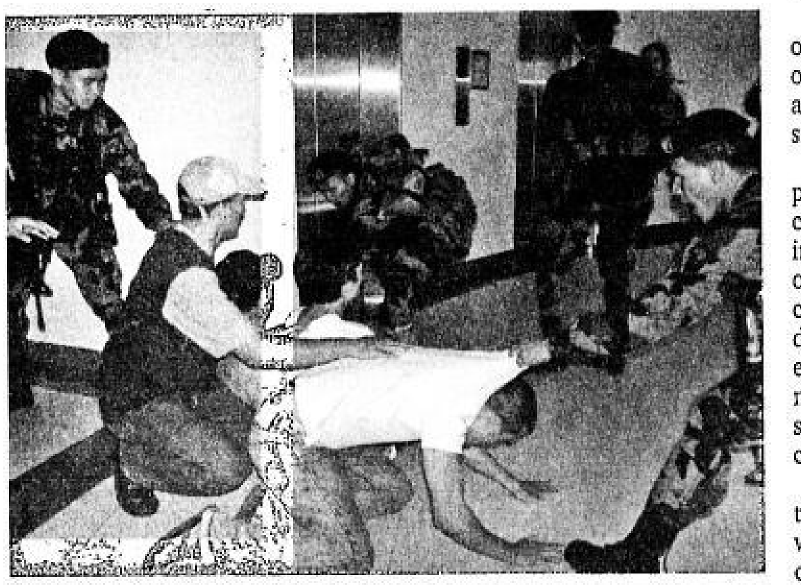
From page A1

missal of some local officials, including Tupas, for alleged involvement in graft, a move that was seen by supporters of the officials as political harassment in the run-up to the May 14 elections.

Dereliction of duty

Reacting to the Senate report, Puno said his Jan. 17 directive to the Philippine National Police to enforce the Ombudsman's dismissal order against Tupas prevented the deterioration of peace and order in the area and restored normal government operations at the capitol.

Puno said the Department of Interior and Local Government (DILG) had merely carried out the orders, which were immediately executory.



A PICTURE IS WORTH A THOUSAND WORDS, and this one says it was an "excessive" assault by the police on the Iloilo provincial capitol in their zeal to serve a dismissal order on Gov. Niel Tupas. INQUIRER PHOTO

He pointed out that he might be vulnerable to charges of dereliction of duty had he failed to implement the directive.

"While we respect the findings of the Senate committees that investigated the Iloilo incident, we would like to make it clear that the DILG had not acted prematurely in enforcing the Ombudsman's order against Governor Tupas," Puno said in a statement.

Excessive force

The committees found that the raiders violated the police rules of engagement, and employed excessive force, and recommended that Dulay and members of the RMG be reshuffled.

The committees also recommended that the Office of the Ombudsman revisit, and if possible revise, its rules on administrative cases. Citing the Constitution, they pointed out that it could recommend sanctions, but not dismiss public officials, a power vested only in the courts.

The Ombudsman's dismissal orders were not final and executory, and could be appealed, they said.

In the report, Sen. Franklin Drilon, chair of the public order committee, said Puno and Undersecretary Wencelito Andanar should be censured for prematurely enforcing the dismissal order on Tupas, which was still subject to appeal.

Period of appeal

He said it would be unthinkable for Puno and Andanar not to be aware of the Pablico v Villapando case in which the Supreme Court ruled that the power to remove erring local officials "is lodged exclusively with the court."

"They cannot pretend not knowing the same. It would be tantamount to gross ignorance of the law for them not to know these landmark decisions. They know pretty well that there is still a period to appeal the said decisions and yet with haste, they immediately implemented the same," he said.

"Therefore, they deserve this censure."

Unofficial order

On Puno's orders, officials of the DILG tried to serve an "unofficial and advance photocopy" of the Ombudsman's Dec. 4, 2006, order on Tupas, but they were rebuffed. On the same day, Andanar swore in Vice Gov. Roberto Armada as governor.

Tupas received the official order by mail only on Jan. 24, exactly a week after the siege.

Gonzalez, for his part, should also be censured for initiating an investigation of the administrative case of grave misconduct against Tupas even though he was not mandated to do so under the law, according to Drilon.

The senator said the justice secretary, who hails from Iloilo, created a special panel of prosecutors to conduct an investigation, and ordered Tupas and his two corespondents, to file their comments on the administrative complaint filed against them.

Gonzalez confirmed order

It was Gonzalez who confirmed that Tupas would be dismissed in an interview over local Bombo Radyo on Jan. 13, two days before the photocopy of the order would be served.

"What is even more revolting is the fact that although it is not his mandate to investigate antigraft complaints, he assumed the investigation of these cases. And even more repulsive is his vigorous denial of his involvement," Drilon said of Gonzalez.

Dismissed for P80,000

The dismissal order stemmed from the case filed by lawyers Heptie Correa and Virgilio Sindico, together with Msgr. Meliton Oso and Nicolas Monteblanco, against Tupas and two board members ,over the release of some P80,000 to the Provincial Board Members League of the Philippines for its training program.

Tupas claimed he had no direct hand in the releases, pointing out that that these were processed by the provincial budget officer, while the checks were signed by the treasurer.

The governor alleged that Sindico had an axe to grind against him because he did not approve the lawyer's application for a quarry permit for the construction of an international airport in the province.

The committees conducted the inquiry on Jan. 25. *With a report from Cynthia D. Balana*

GONZALEZ: Not his job to probe antigraft complaints

PUNO: Merely following orders

ANDANAR: Gross ignorance of the law?

LIKE WAR ZONE: Outside the Iloilo capitol, members of the Regional Mobile Group VI, in full battle gear, gear up to arrest Tupas. INQUIRER PHOTO

This is news: Man bites ...

From page A1

said on Thursday.

One of the suspects leaped down the slope and landed almost directly into the hands of police officers waiting at the bottom. The other suspect, who was armed with a knife took on Edge, and bit the dog in the struggle.

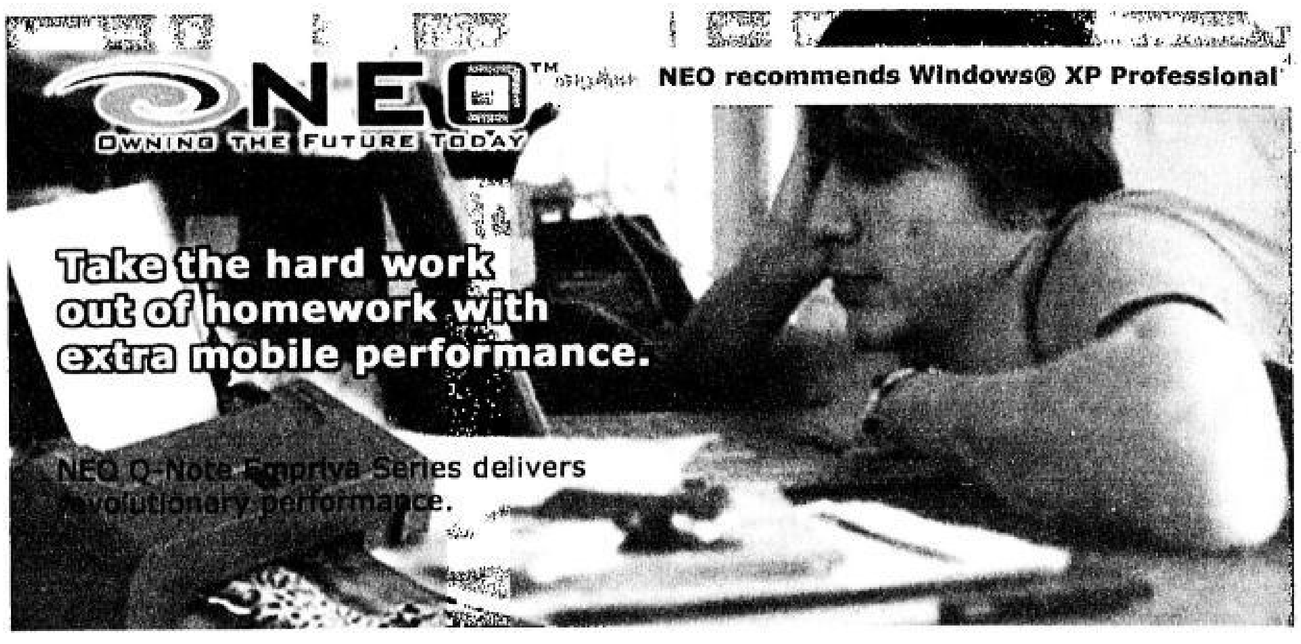
"He bit the dog first," Detective Sergeant John McGregor told The Associated Press.

Edge was unfazed, sinking his teeth into his attacker.

"The dog did win the fight, the offender ended up with one or two lacerations," McGregor said. "I think he knew he was going to get bitten—so he bit the dog first."

In June 2006 Edge underwent emergency surgery after an offender stabbed him in the chest with a hunting knife. After surgery and a blood transfusion, the dog made a complete recovery.

Napier is a coastal city 200 kilometers north of the capital, Wellington. *AP*



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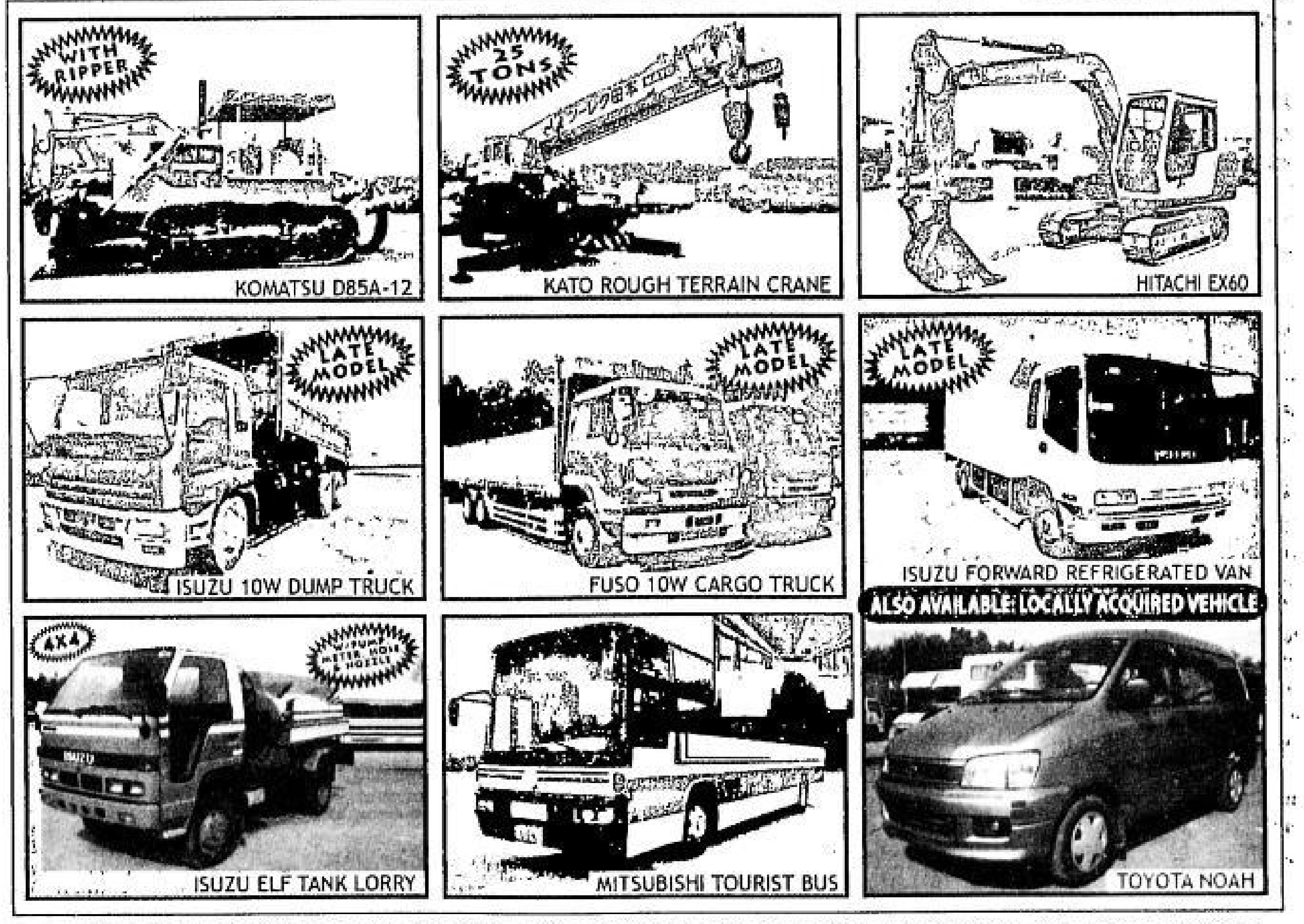

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DAHIL SMART TAYO

Pasig shabu case witness links top cop

Claims drug deliveries, 'red alert' security with police escorts

By Edson C. Tandoc Jr.

A FORMER PASIG POLICE CHIEF was implicated in the alleged three-year illegal operations of a compound housing shanties engaged in the sale of shabu in the city.

Samer Palao, the police witness who claimed to be the right hand of the alleged owner of the compound, also told the Pasig City Regional Trial Court yesterday that an average of 10 kilos of shabu were delivered to the alleged drug den every week since it began operating in 2003.

He said he and other workers in the compound were put on "red alert" status, which meant heightened security, when a delivery was expected.

Palao told the court the "red alert" declaration usually came from alleged drug den owner Amin Imam Boratong, his first wife Mimie and former city police chief Senior Supt. Raul Medina.

Medina denied the allegations when sought for comment.

Palao referred to the former police chief, who was relieved of his post following the discovery of the shabu shanties in February 2006, as "Colonel Medina."

Pressed by RTC Branch 154 Judge Abraham Borreta for the official's first name, Palao gave the first name of the former official, "Raul."

Palao also told the court during direct examination that some members of the city police force served as escorts and guards during alleged shabu deliveries.

"I do not know why they are dragging my name in the issue. I do not know anything about the drug den. I do not even know these people," Medina said in a phone interview yesterday, referring to Boratong and Palao.

"My conscience is clear. I hope the witness would just tell the truth," Medina told the INQUIRER.

He said he would consult his lawyers for possible legal remedies to protect his reputation.

Medina had been transferred to the Quezon City Police District.

In his testimony, Palao said that as Boratong's right hand man, he personally witnessed deliveries as well as the repacking and distribution of shabu to about 50 "*sistemadors*," or those who sold drugs stored in the shanties to interested buyers.

Palao said he grew up with Boratong's family in Lumba Bayabao in Lanao del Sur. As right hand man, he said he did whatever Boratong asked him to do.

But, in an earlier interview, Bo-

PASIG/ A20

G PASS
A finalist in the Most Innovative Technology Development Category of the GSM Association's
2007 Global Mobile Awards

G-Xchange, Inc. (GXI, a wholly-owned subsidiary of Globe Telecom) was nominated this year for its pioneering G-Pass service, the world's first contactless ticketing solution with a mobile leg. G-Pass lets Globe and TM subscribers wirelessly pay for their MRT3 train fare with just a tap of a wireless Radio Frequency Identification (RFID) chip.

GXI president Rizza Maniego-Eala welcomed the nomination as a major achievement for the company as it continues to develop even more groundbreaking M-commerce solutions by making money transfers and micro payment transactions more affordable and accessible to a larger public. "GXI is all about making people's lives better through mobile technology. We feel that this nomination for the 2007 Mobile Innovation Awards shows that we are on the right track," she said.

G-Pass is made even more convenient by its integration with GCash, the revolutionary electronic payment system that won Best Messaging Service at the 2005 GSM Awards. The integration of G-Pass with GCash lets subscribers reload their G-Pass chips through their mobile phones anytime and anywhere. Users also get real-time updates via SMS to confirm transactions and to remind them of their outstanding balance.

The six finalists will be presented for judging at the Mobile Innovation Forum in February as part of the 3GSM World Congress, the world's largest annual mobile industry event, which will be held this year in Barcelona, Spain. The prestigious Mobile Innovation Awards is a venue for small, young, and upstart companies to present their ideas to leading industry investors and mobile operators via a high-profile international event.

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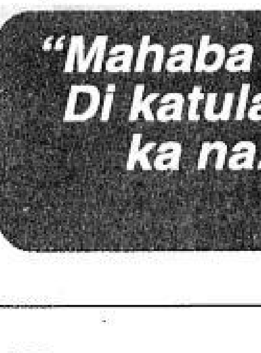

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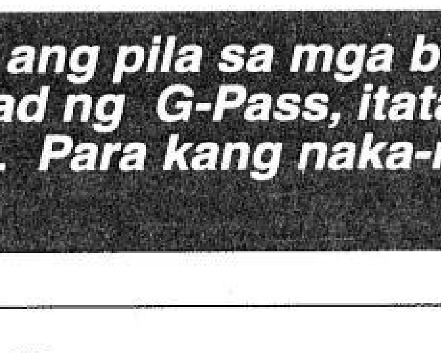

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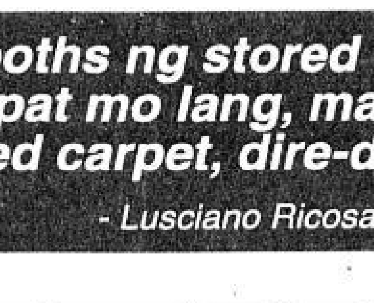

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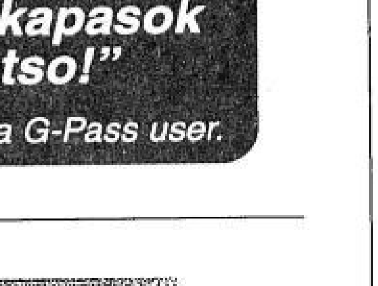

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Murder case against jail guard now in court

METROBRIEFS

No foul play

POLICE ruled out foul play in the case of a 37-year-old woman who was found dead in her friend's house in Mandaluyong City early morning yesterday. Case invesigator SPO1 Crispin Pio said the body of Miracle Pantia bore no signs of possible foul play based on their initial investigation. Pantia was found dead inside the house of Arnold Arnaiz in Barangay Vergara. Police said after the couple had a drinking session, she had retired to a room to get some sleep at around 1:30 a.m. Arnaiz found her lifeless body two hours later.

Emman Cena

Pasay kissing tilt

EXPECT heavy traffic along Roxas Boulevard, Diosdado Macapagal Avenue and Edsa going to SM Mall of Asia in Pasay City on Saturday, from 6 p.m. to past midnight for the CloseUp Lovapalooza kiss fest. The event is an attempt by the Philippines to reclaim from Hungary the Guinness World record of the highest number of couples kissing simultaneously. Around 50,000 participants are expected for the event.

Wellness fest

FREE lectures and demonstrations on psychic healing, innergizer therapy and beauty care and reasonably-priced food supplements and other holistic services will be offered to the public at the Psychic and Wellness Festival set on Feb. 14-16 at the ABS-CBN Main Building, South Triangle, Quezon City. Filipino psychics Ada Victoria, Brother Gem and Dante Alcoriza are among the featured lecturers. For inquiries, call the secretariat at tel. no. 3717016.

FULL LOAD

This reliable tricycle is used by this man not only for his scrap materials business. It also brings his son to school and his wife to the market. EDWIN BACASMAS

By Nancy Carvajal

RICARDO ZULUETA, THE JAIL GUARD who allegedly shot and killed a suspect in the robbery-slay case of a television camera man, is now detained at the Caloocan City jail for murder, according to a Task Force Usig report.

The task force, headed by Police Deputy Director Avelino Razon, was created by President Macapagal-Arroyo to investigate the killings of militant members and journalists.

'Accidental'

The case for murder against Zulueta, who said he "accidentally shot" Hernani Magnayon, a prime suspect in the murder of Ralph Runez of RPN 9, is now in the sala of City Regional Trial Court Judge Eleanor Kwong of Branch 128.

The task force report also said a case of obstruction of justice was filed against former Caloocan City jail warden Supt. Emilio Culang and nine of his subordinates.

Detained

"Contrary to reports, the jail guard is in prison, detained without bail," a source in the police said.

He provided INQUIRER a copy of the task force's report.

The judge did not allow Zulueta to post bail while waiting for the trial start.

Doubts

Certain sectors, particularly the National Press Club headed by Roy Mabasa, expressed doubts that Zulueta had been charged for Magnayon's death.

Zulueta, at the time of the shooting, was one of the bodyguards of Interior Undersecretary Marious Corpuz, but he was allowed to spend the nights in the jail compound.

Published reports said Magnayon was supposedly giving Zulueta a massage inside the records section room of the facility when the shooting occurred.

Block

In charging Culang, the task force said he "impeded the processing of the scene of the crime."

The warden refused to allow police investigators to enter the jail compound immediately after the shooting.

Man nabbed for collecting fees for nonexistent jeep franchises

By Margaux C. Ortiz

AN ALLEGED MEMBER OF A paramilitary group was arrested by agents of the National Bureau of Investigation (NBI) in Quezon City yesterday for allegedly duping at least 20 prospective jeepney operators.

NBI Director Nestor Mantaring identified the suspect as Crisanto Cristobal, 38, of No. 53 Manugal St., Tatalon Quezon City.

Confiscated from Cristobal was an identification card connecting him with H-World United Nations Military Philippine Government International Police Commission, which Mantaring said became controversial more than a decade ago with the involvement of alleged leader Royette Padilla.

An investigation conducted by the NBI Counter Intelligence Division (CID) headed by Regner Peneza showed that on May 5, 2006, Cristobal had introduced himself as an employee of the Land Transportation Franchising and Regulatory Board (LTFRB) to Valenzuela residents interested in acquiring jeepney franchises.

Cristobal told his prospective "clients" that for a P45,000 fee, his connections at the LTFRB could provide them with jeepney franchises allowing them to ply certain routes in Valenzuela.

After a series of meetings, Cristobal was able to collect a total of P457,500 from the complainants led by Juan Casanova.

Casanova and the other victims however sought NBI assistance after the suspect failed to keep his end of the bargain, according to Peneza.

Cristobal was arrested at the Land Transportation Office canteen while receiving marked money from the victims.

The suspect, who admitted that he had worked as a "fixer" at the government agency for more than five years, said a colleague had given him the H-World identification card in exchange for P150.

Pasay community to get MMDA, DPWH aid for access road

By Julie M. Aurelio

A CHANCE AT A FRESH START.

The Pasay City government is set to discuss the situation of Muslim informal settlers in the city's Reclamation Area following the violent dismantling of a wooden bridge in Baclaran on Jan. 5.

The city government said it would hold a dialogue with the Office on Muslim Affairs to talk about possible options for informal settlers living along the Reclamation Area.

In the past, residents of the Muslim community had clashed with the Metropolitan Manila Development Authority's Sidewalk Clearing Operations Unit (SCOU) who had forcibly dismantled the wooden bridge connecting the Muslim residents to the Baclaran area.

Some residents were injured during the violent operation.

Pasay City Mayor Allan Panaligan said that the municipal government has come up with a plan to construct an alternative road connecting the Muslim community to the city proper.

At a press conference yesterday, MMDA and the Department of Public Works and Highways officials agreed that the Pasay city government would shoulder the materials for the road's construction.

The local government will also provide the funds for streetlights, lampposts and electricity.

The MMDA, on the other hand, will undertake and oversee the construction of the access road.

An outpost for watchmen will also be put up in the area while another structure will house paramedics in case of emergencies.

"The aim of the conference between the MMDA and the DPWH is to construct an alternative route on the 500-meter grassy portion along Roxas Boulevard so residents can have easy access to Edsa," Panaligan said.

The mayor added that the national government is planning to convert the current Muslim settlement area into an Inter-Modal Terminal for buses and passenger jeepneys.

DID YOU KNOW

ON FEB. 9, 1945, American soldiers arrived in Mandaluyong (then a municipality) and liberated it from the Japanese Imperial forces, saving it from further damage. To mark this milestone in the city's history, local authorities named one of its major streets Nueve de Pebrero.

Cyril L. Bonabente, Inquirer Research

Pasig shabu case . . .

From page A19

ratong told the INQUIRER it was Palao who owned the drug dens on his lot in Barangay Sto. Tomas.

Palao, who he said was his elder biological brother, just got mad at him because Palao suspected he had reported the alleged drug den to the police.

Police raid

In an unprecedented police operation last year, the Philippine National Police raided the compound of over 50 shanties, just half a kilometer away from the Eastern Police District Headquarters and the Pasig City Hall, that served as shabu "restaurants."

Clientele

Customers could reportedly order and use shabu by the gram.

More than 300 persons were arrested while two dozens policemen and officials were relieved of their posts following the operation.

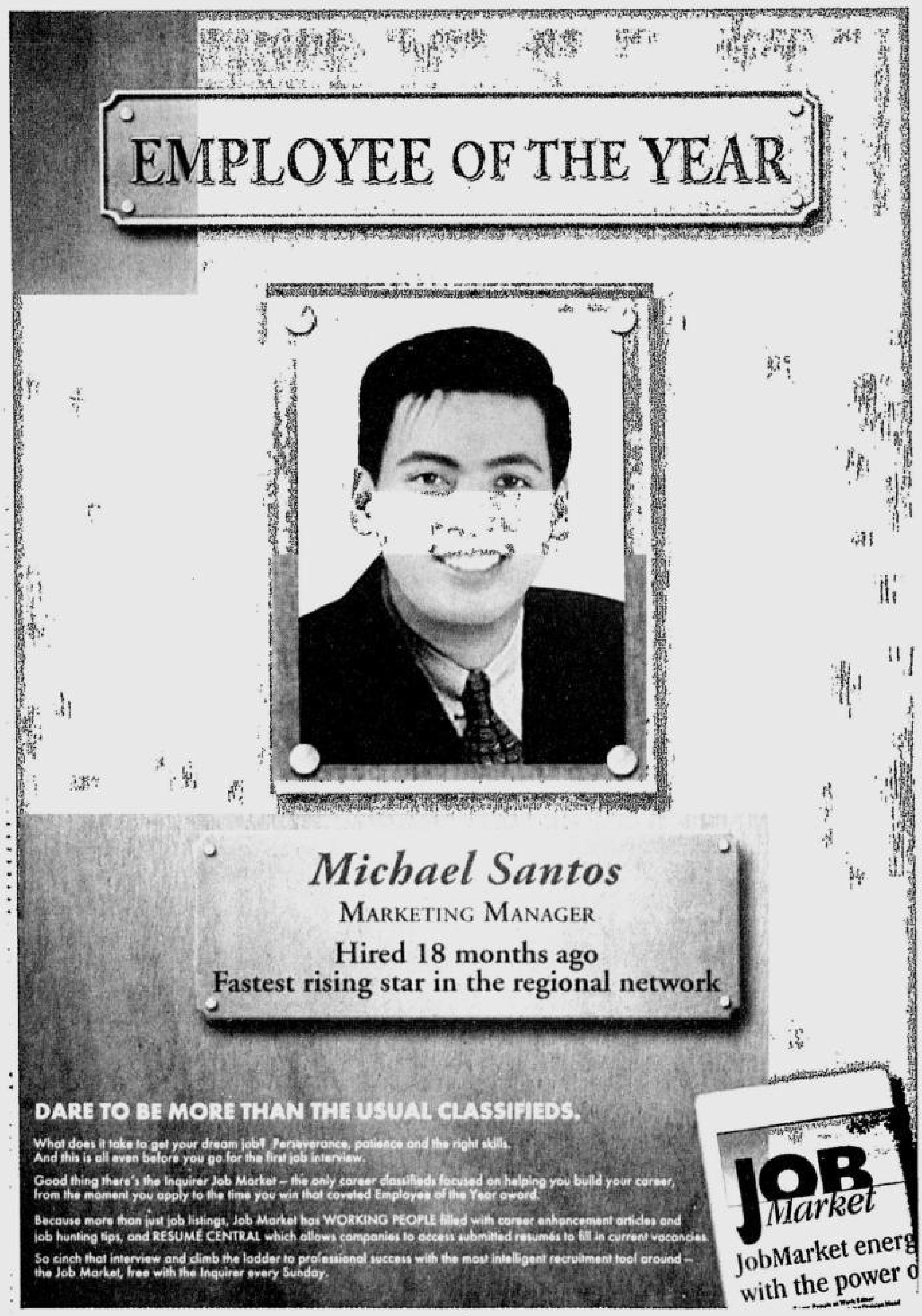
Tearful reunion

Boratong broke into tears when he saw Palao at the court last week.

"I just miss him. He is still my brother after all. I still love him," Boratong told reporters in Filipino.

But yesterday, when Palao pointed to him after he was asked to identify who among the people in the gallery was the alleged owner of the shabu compound, Boratong just looked straight at Palao and nodded several times.

Palao glanced at Boratong a few times but mainly kept his eyes on the prosecutor doing the direct examination.



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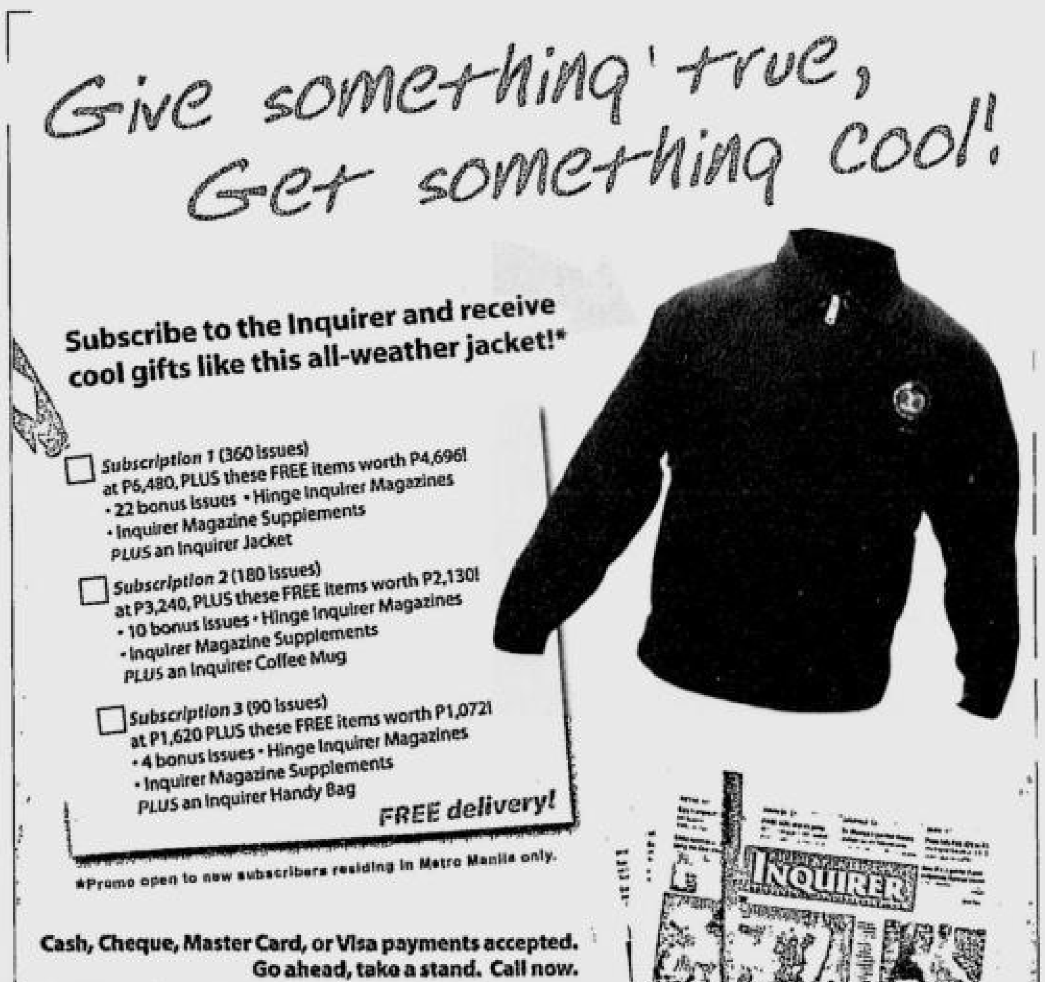

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STILL WINTER WEATHER
A cardinal sits in one of the snow-covered limbs of a spruce tree in Glencoe, Ky., Feb. 7. AP

Huge hacker attack slows Internet traffic

WASHINGTON—THE WORST attack in years on the Internet's infrastructure slowed traffic but failed to bring down the Web, with infected computers around the world used as "zombies," security experts said Wednesday.

Private sector analysts said the computers that direct Internet traffic were hit by a so-called denial of service attack, which seeks to slow or knock out a network.

The US Department of Homeland Security said only that its cybersecurity arm had been monitoring "anomalous" activity on the Internet.

"The nature of the traffic has not been confirmed, and the servers which are overseas remain operational," DHS spokesperson Russ Knocke said.

"There are no indications of any direct nexus to the United States at this time. Also, there is no credible intelligence to suggest an imminent threat to the homeland or our computing systems at this time." Graham Cluley, senior technology consultant at the London-based firm Sophos, said Tuesday's incident "seems to have been the most serious attack against these domain name servers" since late 2002.

Cluley said three of the 13 domain name system (DNS) servers that control global Internet traffic were hit with a denial of service attack, which means they were bombarded with information requests in an effort to bring them down.

Cluley noted that the attack was coming from PCs taken over by hackers to create zombie networks or "botnets" to bombard the servers with traffic.

"These zombie computers could have brought the Web to its knees, and while the resilience of the root servers should be commended, more needs to be done to tackle the root of the problem—the lax attitude of some users towards IT security," he said.

He said that since the 2002 attacks, "the system has become more resilient and is well set up to bounce back from these attacks."

AFP

WORLDBRIEFS

Lebanese, Israeli troops exchange fire

JERUSALEM—Lebanese and Israeli troops exchanged fire across the Lebanese border late Wednesday for the first time since the end of the war last year, causing no injuries. The incident was sparked by Israeli sappers moving in to clear unexploded ordnance just across the border, both sides said. They withdrew early Thursday after completing their mission, the Israeli army said. "The Lebanese army first fired warning shots. We asked them through Unifil (the United Nations force in Lebanon) to stop shooting. Shots were fired in the direction of our forces," an Israeli army spokesperson told AFP. "We retaliated in the direction of the shots. Our forces had no injuries." "The firing has now finished and we consider the incident closed," he added. ***AFP***

US approves first nonprescription diet pill

WASHINGTON—America's ongoing battle against obesity has a new weapon—the first government-approved diet pill that can be bought without a prescription. Intended only for people 18 and older, the drug, called alli, is a reduced-strength version of the prescription diet drug Xenical. The Food and Drug Administration on Wednesday announced its approval of sales of the lower-dose drug without a prescription, with officials stressing that it needs to be used in combination with a diet and exercise program. "Using this drug alone is unlikely to be beneficial," said Dr. Charles Ganley, FDA's director of nonprescription products. The new drug will be sold by GlaxoSmithKline PLC and the company said it is expected to be in stores by summer. While the final price has not been determined, it is expected to cost about $1 to $2 a day. Xenical is made by Roche Holding AG. ***AP***

Nations to start crucial N. Korea talks

BEIJING—Six-nation talks aimed at pressing North Korea into giving up its nuclear weapons were set to resume here Thursday for what delegates said could be a watershed moment in the four years of negotiations. Four months after North Korea conducted its first atomic test to back its claims of being a nuclear power, envoys were back in the Chinese capital amid cautious hopes the reclusive nation may be willing to eventually disarm. US envoy Christopher Hill said he hoped Pyongyang would recommit to a six-party deal reached in September 2005, when it agreed to abandon its nuclear program in exchange for aid, energy benefits and security guarantees. The agreement fell apart two months later amid North Korean protests over unrelated US sanctions imposed against it for alleged money laundering and counterfeiting. ***AFP***

NYC cabbie returns bag of diamond rings

NEW YORK—She gave him just a 30-cent tip, but a New York cabbie didn't hesitate before tracking down a passenger to return 31 diamond rings she had left behind. "I'm not going to take someone else's money or property to make me rich. I don't want it that way," said driver Osman Chowdhury, who is from Bangladesh. He was even reluctant to accept the $100-check the passenger offered as a reward, eventually accepting it to cover the fares he lost while trying to locate her. ***AP***

Officials report 6th helicopter downing in Iraq

BAGHDAD—A helicopter operated by a private security firm came down in Iraq last week, US officials said on Thursday, an incident that marks the sixth downing of a helicopter in three weeks. Reports of the Jan. 31 incident, in which no one was killed, come a day after seven crew members and passengers aboard a US Marine helicopter were killed when it crashed near Baghdad, possibly after being hit by ground fire. The US military, concerned that militants have changed tactics or are using more sophisticated weapons, has said it is adjusting its tactics. In all, 28 US servicemen and private security contractors have been killed in the helicopter crashes. ***Reuters***

More rains hit flood-stricken Jakarta

JAKARTA—More heavy rains struck Indonesia's capital on Thursday, hampering clean-up efforts and piling on misery for hundreds of thousands of people camping under make-shift shelters after days of floods. However, an official at the Jakarta Flood Crisis center said the latest flooding was less widespread than in the past week. The death toll from the floods, Jakarta's worst for at least five years, remained at about 50, the official said, with around 230,000 still displaced. ***Reuters***

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The WORLD

Editor **Luverne B. Gueco**

3rd letter bomb in 3 days explodes in Britain, hurts 4

LONDON—A LETTER BOMB EXPLODED AT Britain's drivers' licensing agency on Wednesday, extending what the police depicted as a coordinated series of attacks that has troubled the nation's leaders and inspired comparisons with the Unabomber in the United States.

The blast at the Driver and Vehicle Licensing Agency, which slightly injured four people, was the third in three days, striking mainly at institutions and companies involved in regulating motorists and automobiles.

The licensing agency, located at Swansea in south Wales, collects automobile taxes as well as issuing drivers' licenses. The other targets this week were companies associated with collecting congestion charge fees for cars entering central London and with supplying cameras used to monitor traffic flows.

Police disclosed Wednesday that four other letter bombs had been sent in January to other businesses, two of them providing forensic outsourcing services to the police. A letter bomb was also sent to the director of an outsourcing company providing services to a tax collection office in Folkestone, Kent, south of London.

There have been no fatalities or reports of serious injuries.

Police said one of the letter bombs sent last month bore the name of Barry Horne, an animal rights activist who died in 2001 while serving an 18-year jail term on arson charges. The Association of Chief Police Officers said the first three letter bombs sent last month were apparently linked, presumably related to animal rights protesters.

Anton Setchell, the domestic terrorism spokesperson for the Association of Chief Police Officers, told a news conference in London that the explosives in the letters had been "of a small pyrotechnic nature" and did not contain conventional explosives.

"The intention seems to be to cause shock and relatively minor injuries," Setchell said. The police had received no claim of responsibility from any group, he said.

The latest letter bombings were mentioned in Parliament on Wednesday when Prime Minister Tony Blair called the attacks "traumatic" and said the police were investigating "very closely." *NYT*

War objector's court-martial ends in mistrial

FORT LEWIS, WASH.—A MILITARY judge declared a mistrial on Wednesday for the court-martial of a US Army officer who publicly refused to fight in Iraq and criticized the war.

The military judge ruled that First Lt. Ehren Watada had unknowingly signed a document that amounted to a confession of guilt. Watada, 28, had faced up to four years in prison if convicted of one charge of missing movements and two charges of conduct unbecoming an officer for his criticism of the war.

The mistrial was an unexpected ending to a case that had rallied the antiwar movement in the first known court-martial of a US Army officer for publicly refusing to serve in Iraq.

Lt. Col. John Head, the military judge, declared a mistrial after throwing out a "stipulation of fact"—an agreement over certain facts of the trial—that forced the government to request a mistrial instead of immediately arguing its entire case over to prove those facts with new witnesses.

The judge said he could not accept the stipulation, because it amounts to a confession to the missing movements charge when Watada stated he is not guilty.

Watada's lawyer, Eric Seitz, told Reuters the mistrial was a "disastrous" outcome for the government because a retrial would constitute double jeopardy, which forbids a defendant from being tried twice for the same crime.

"These events today are going to be the death knell for the government's case," said Seitz, who added that the government faces an uphill climb since it requested the mistrial.

Lt. Col. Robert Resnick, chief of administrative law at Ft. Lewis, contended that double jeopardy had not attached and the government has the legal authority to retry the case.

Reuters

NASA astronaut Lisa Nowak being escorted to her court appearance at an Orlando Corrections facility in Feb. 6 in Orlando, Florida. AFP

Love-crazed astronaut returns to Texas

HOUSTON—HIDING HER FACE from the media, astronaut Lisa Nowak returned to Texas on Wednesday, a day after being charged in Florida with trying to murder the woman she believed was her romantic rival for a space shuttle pilot's affections.

The astronaut, her head covered by a jacket, was escorted from a plane into a police car waiting on the tarmac.

"She looked thin, looked tired," said John Gruttadaurio, a passenger on her flight.

Nowak was charged Tuesday with attempted first-degree murder, attempted kidnapping and three other crimes stemming from what police described as a love triangle involving a fellow astronaut.

Police said Nowak, accustomed to wearing astronaut diapers during the space shuttle's launch and return, wore them on a 900-mile (1,450-kilometer) drive from Houston to Florida so she would not have to make bathroom stops as she raced to confront Colleen Shipman at the Orlando International Airport. A police affidavit said Nowak, in a wig and trench coat, had "stealthily followed the victim while in disguise and possessed multiple deadly weapons," including a knife and steel mallet.

She was released on bail but ordered to stay away from Shipman and wear a monitoring device.

Nowak underwent a medical assessment Wednesday at the Johnson Space Center, said Nasa spokesperson Nicole Cloutier-Lemasters, who would not say whether that included a psychological evaluation. "She's not staying here. She's leaving with her family," Cloutier-Lemasters said.

It was a remarkable downfall for a woman whose life seemed to be on a perfect trajectory until a few months ago. Just weeks ago, Nowak and her husband separated after 19 years.

Nowak became an astronaut after winning a series of Navy service awards. She had flown on the shuttle Discovery, and was a mother of three children. She said in a September interview with Ladies Home Journal magazine that her husband, Richard, "works in Mission Control, so he's part of the whole space business, too. And supportive also."

But there were signs that not everything was right in her life.

In a Nasa interview last year, before her mission aboard Discovery, she spoke about the strain her career placed on her family. She has twin 5-year-old girls and a teenage son.

"It's a sacrifice for our own personal time and our families and the people around us," she said. "But I do think it's worth it because if you don't explore and take risks and go do all these things, then everything will stay the same."

In November, a neighbor reported hearing the sounds of dishes being thrown inside Nowak's Houston-area home.

The final unraveling came this week after police arrested her for allegedly trying to kidnap Shipman, whom she believed was her rival for the affections of astronaut William Oefelein. In Orlando, she boarded an airport shuttle bus with Shipman and followed her to her car. Crying, Nowak sprayed a chemical into the car. Shipman drove to a parking lot booth for help.

"Perplexed is the word that I'm sticking with," said astronaut Chris Ferguson, who attended Nowak's bail hearing in Orlando.

Jon Clark, a former Nasa flight surgeon who lost his wife, astronaut Laurel Clark, in the Columbia disaster in 2003, told CNN on Wednesday that Nowak supported his family then and he supports her now.

"She was a mother before she was an astronaut. I mean, she really was into family life, and what's happened in the last few days has just been totally a shock. She is a really wonderful, good, caring person," he said. "You have to find forgiveness and love in your heart to get her through this."

Nasa needs to have a stronger psychological and behavioral health support system for shuttle astronauts, Clark said.

"They don't have to have any evaluation before or after a mission, and it is only when something catastrophic happens does this ever even come to light," he said.

Police charged Nowak with attempting to murder Shipman based on weapons and other items found with Nowak or in her car: pepper spray, a BB-gun, a steel mallet, knife and rubber tubing.

"We believe that the items that we found certainly would have caused Colleen Shipman serious bodily injury or death," Orlando Police Sgt. Barb Jones said. *AP*

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CHAUFFEUR-DRIVEN SAMANTHA
Samantha, a 3-year-old cat, leans out of a stroller while being rolled through Lions Park in Cheyenne, Wyo., by her owner, Aniko Bennett, Feb. 7. AP

WHAT'S INSIDE

Ginebra-SMB title series on /A24

SPORTS

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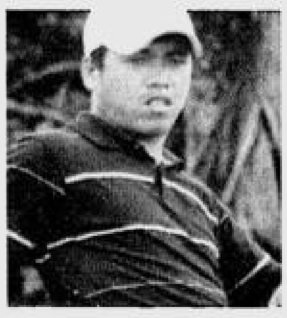
eedback: inquirer sprt name/age/city/message to 2207 (Globe) or 283 (Smart) **E-mail:** pr_sports@inq

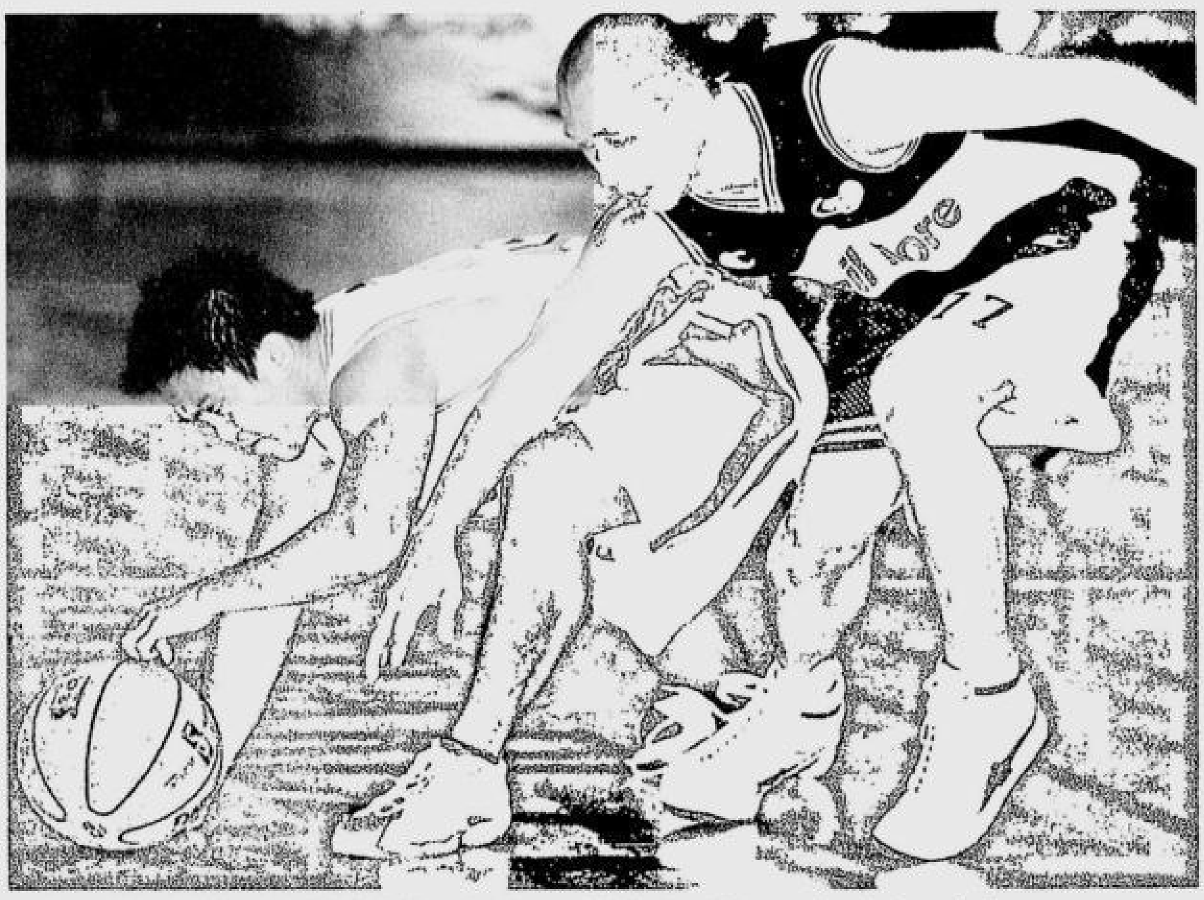
Estrera-Bayron boosts lead to 4 /A24



Hapee makes it; Harbour lives

Bucao lifts Teeth Masters as Gallent's five forges Game 5

By Jasmine W. Payo



MAIL and More's Wynsjohn Te (right) battles Hapee-PCU's Ronald Bucao for the loose ball. RYAN LIM

HAPEE-PCU NAILED the first PBL championship berth yesterday behind back-up guard Ronald Bucao even as Harbour Centre forged a winner-take-all encounter with Toyota Otis tomorrow for the other Silver Cup title slot.

The 5-foot-7 Bucao buried nine of his 11 points from beyond the arc to lead the Teeth Masters past Mail and More, 88-75, in Game 4 of their semifinal duel at the Olivarez College Sports Center.

"He was the surprise package, he made the difference," said coach Jun Noel of Bucao, a standout from the University of the Visayas, who complemented his breakout game with a conference-high 12 assists and four steals.

The Teeth Masters wrapped up the series at 3-1 even though top gunner Jason Castro posted a rare single-digit output of eight markers.

But Toyota Otis couldn't close out its own semifinal series as Harbour Centre triumphed, 86-83, to forge a deciding Game 5.

The Port Masters, who nearly squandered a 75-61 lead, nailed seven of their 10 free throws in the final minute to pull it out after the Sparks had threatened at 79-74.

"We had our fourth-quarter boo-boos again, but I think we're much better now," said Harbour Centre coach Jorge Gallent.

Chico Lanete and JC Intal boosted the Port Masters to a 23-10 lead and Harbour Centre remained in control until Marvin Cruz sparked a Toyota Otis comeback down the stretch.

The Teeth Masters blew the game wide open with Bucao presiding over an early fourth-period run for a 65-53 advantage.

It will be Hapee-PCU's first Finals appearance since winning the crown in the 2004 Platinum Cup.

"We were already happy making it to the top four, this is already a bonus for us," said Noel.

Beau Belga, who paced Hapee-PCU's balanced charge with 12 points, helped stretch the lead to 77-64 after knocking in four straight points. A Bucao triple bloated the Teeth Masters' edge, 80-66, with three minutes left.

The scores:

First Game

HAPEE-PCU 88—Hugnatan 12, Belga 12, Bucao 11, L. Rodriguez 11, Sanz 11, Rodriguez 9, Borboran 9, Castro 8, Moreno 3, Butel 2, Larong 0, David 0.

MAIL AND MORE 75—Bravo 14, Quinahan 13, Viray 13, David 8, Te 7, Ballesteros 6, Espiritu 6, Canizares 2, Del Rosario 0.

Quarters: 20-20, 41-35, 58-53, 88-75

Second Game

HARBOUR CENTRE 86—Lanete 17, Intal 16, Capati 15, Gamboa 9, Fernandez 7, Coching 6, Arana 4, Gaco 4, Williams 3, Ortiguerra 3, Asoro 2, Raymundo 0, Vergara 0.

TOYOTA OTIS 83—Jazul 15, Aldave 11, Daa 11, Cruz 10, Cabahug 9, Dedicatoria 7, Rodriguez 7, Santos 5, Coronel 5, Guevarra 3, Jaime 0.

Quarters: 26-14, 44-34, 65-54, 86-83

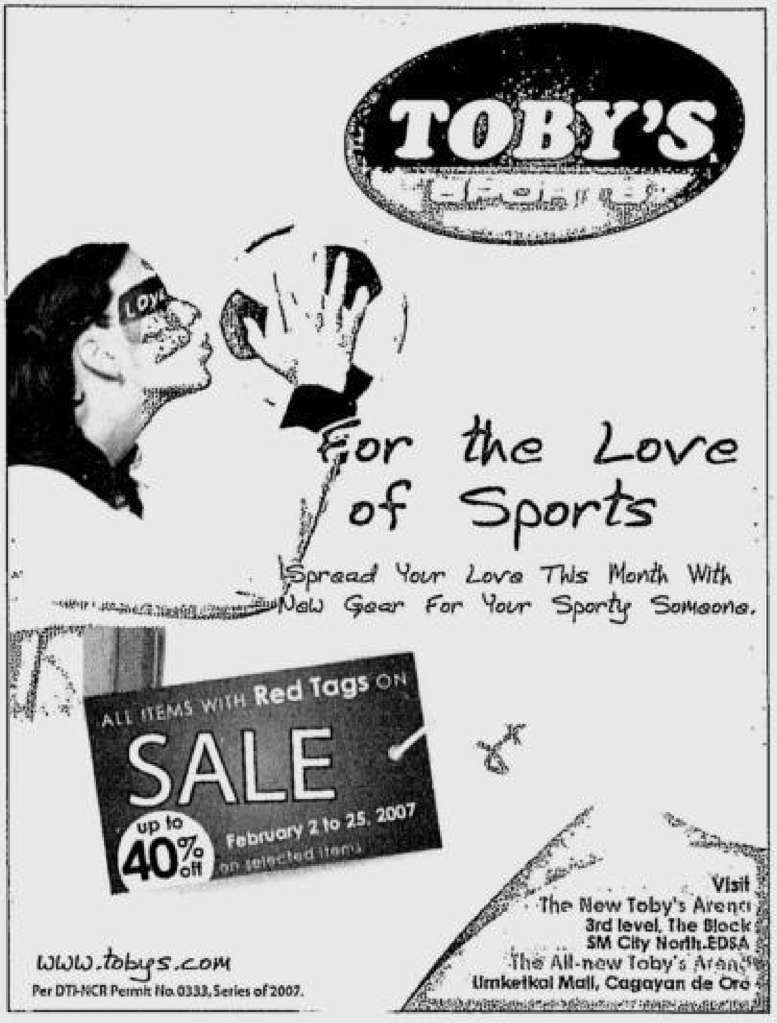
Rosales, Que 4 off with 70s

KUALA LUMPUR—Gerald Rosales sustained his fine form by shooting a two-under-par 70 like Filipino compatriot Angelo Que Thursday to stay four strokes off the lead at the start of the Maybank Malaysia Open.

Philippine Open champion Frankie Miñoza also kept his place in the upper half of the field with a level par 72 but Juvic Pagunsan, last year's rookie sensation, struggled with a 75 in the $1.29 million championship jointly sanctioned by the Asian Tour and European Tour.

Rosales, who produced a tournament-best seven-under-par 65 at Wack Wack's East course to finish second behind Miñoza last week in the RP Open, picked up five birdies against two bogeys and a double bogey in a 35-35 trip at the Saujana Golf and Country Club course.

Robert Rock of England shot a 66 to take a one-stroke lead over India's S.S.P. Chowrasia even as the stars of the event floundered in steamy conditions.



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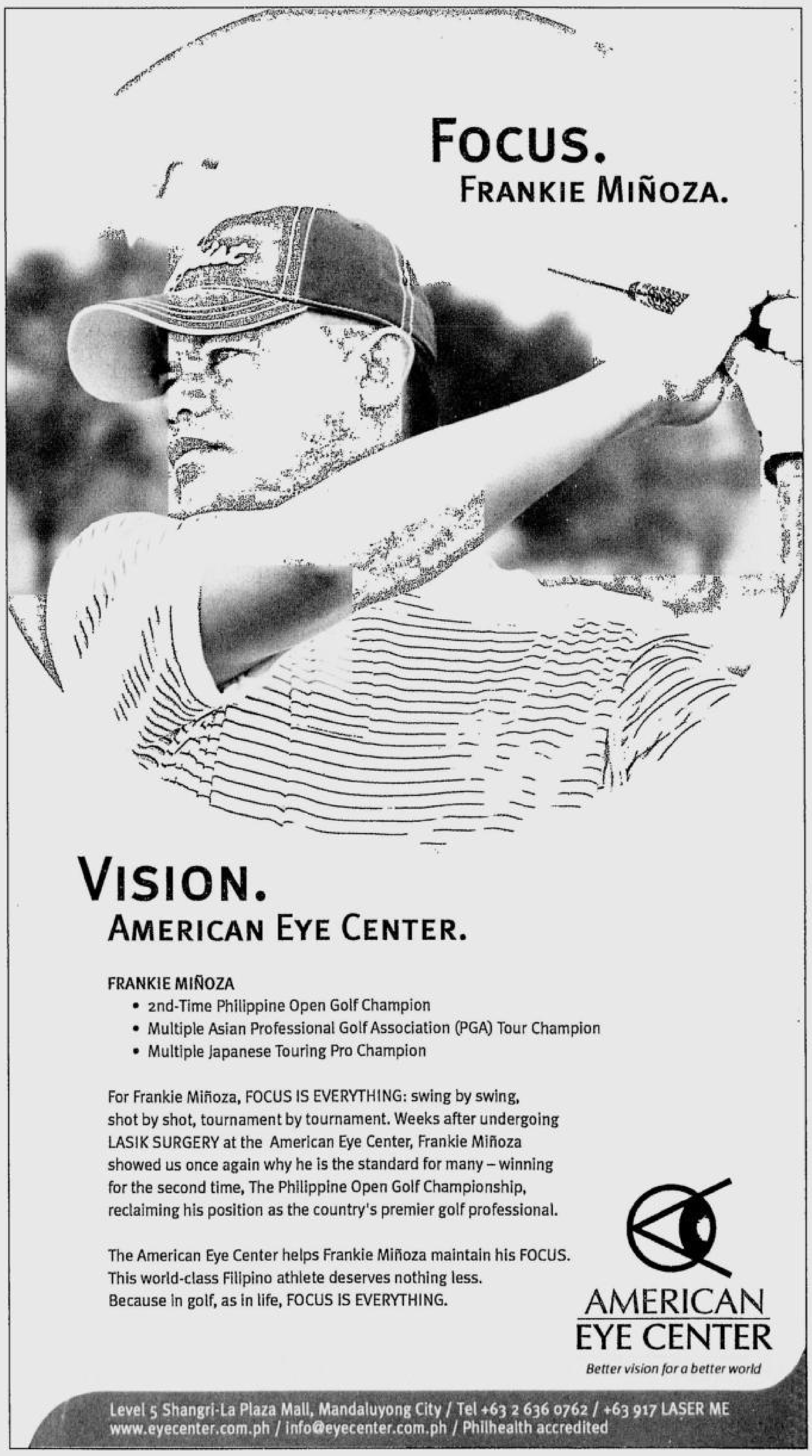

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Estrera-Bayron boosts lead to 4

By Musong R. Castillo

SILANG, CAVITE—EDWIN ESTRERA AND Jay Bayron boosted their Konica Minolta National Pro-Am lead to four strokes despite a scrambling seven-over-par 78 yesterday at the Langer layout of the Riviera here.

Estrera-Bayron had a 152 total, 10 over par, in what could go down as the highest scoring edition of this event revived in 2001 by U-Bix chair and CEO Edilberto Bravo.

Conditions at the tough layout continued to spook the huge field, with no team breaking par—let alone come close to it—as the winds blew hard all day.

In second spot with 156 aggregates were Boyet Villavicencio-Arnold Regidor (77), Zaldy Salvador-Rufino Bayron (79), Elmer Salvador-Lee Tong-hwa (79), and Tony Lascuña-Yu Min-jong (76).

Former world junior champion Carito Villaroman whose partner, Sunshine Baraquiel, is the only lady entry among 204 starters in a field of 121 teams, shot an 80 for third spot, just five shots off.

The defending champion team of Gerard Cantada and JR Tanpinco continued to struggle, shooting an 81 this time to drop nine strokes behind and virtually doom its "four-peat" bid with two rounds left.

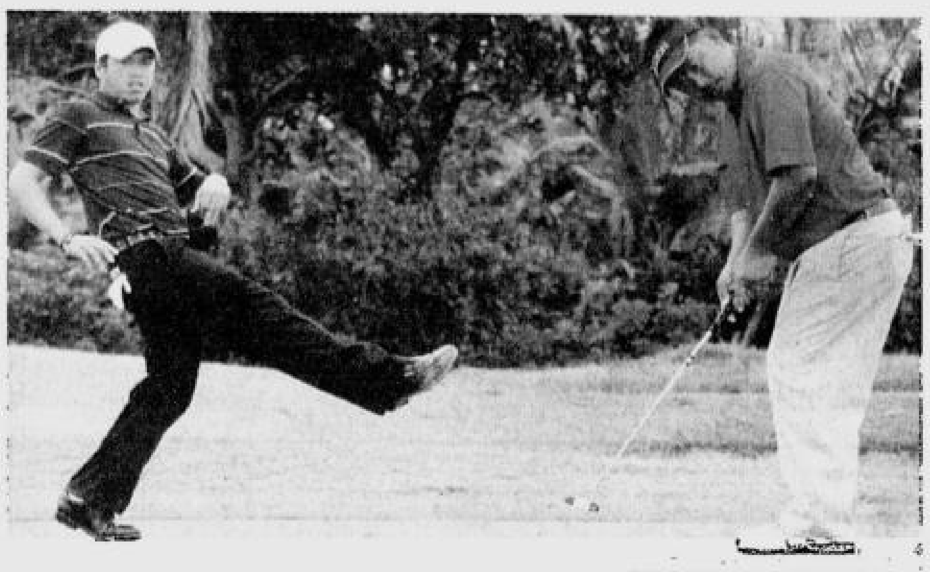
Meanwhile, Mark Fernando, the ex-caddy who aced the 170-yard No. 4 on Wednesday, has decided to donate the Avanza he won to the Philippine Amateur Golf Development Foundation of Tommy Manotoc.

Fernando is training under the National Caddies Open program being run by the PAGDF.

Four teams were disqualified for declaring wrong handicaps, with South Korean contenders Kim Chang-hoi and Choi Hyun-jin emerging the biggest casualties.

"It's very clear that the rule disallows a foreign pro or a Filipino pro in the Top 30 of the Order of Merit to pair with an amateur having an index handicap of 5 or below," said tournament director Henry Arabelo. "They broke the rule, so they were disqualified."

Kim and Choi (handicap 3.8 at Royal Northwoods), who were just a stroke off the leaders after Round 1, were ousted from the tournament together with Koreans Kim Dong-ook and Ko Byung-seok (2.7 handicap at Riviera), Japanese Fujii Fujio and Gary Sales (4.6 at Villamor) and Filipino Edwin Sanchez and Korean Lee Mon-ho (4.0 at Eagle Ridge).



INQUIRER PHOTO / ROMY HOMILLADA

JAY Bayron (left) provides the body english as partner Edwin Estretra muffs a putt at No. 10.

Ginebra-SMB title series on

Menk rejoining Kings

DONDON HONTIVEROS HAS NEVER BEEN SOMEONE WHO talks too much.

But yesterday, as everyone tried to come up with a teaser for the San Miguel Beer-Barangay Ginebra clash for the Talk 'N Text Philippine Cup, the Beermen's Game 7 semifinal hero had the handle to tickle everyone's fancy.

"We're not sister teams here, but brothers trying to win the heart of one woman," Hontiveros told a group of reporters in Filipino during the pre-Finals press launch.

"There'll be no brotherly love in this series."

Game 1 of the title series comes off the wraps at 7:20 tonight at the Araneta Coliseum in Cubao, with both squads fresh off hard-earned semifinal victories.

"Seven games," Ginebra's Jong Uichico said, when asked of how far he thinks this series will go.

Curiously, Uichico will be coaching a team, other than San Miguel Ber, in a title series for the first time. His six championships in nine title appearances all came with SMB.

"Coaching in a series not with San Miguel is something new for me," he said. "But I have a job to do and that is to win a championship. We will defeat them (Beermen) lovingly."

Uichico, who was pulled out of the San Miguel bench before the season started, tried to play his cards close to his chest, even putting everyone on hold as far as the status of Eric Menk is concerned.

Until Danny Seigle grabbed the microphone and told everyone.

"He told me he was going to play on Friday (today)," Seigle announced, drawing laughter from players of both teams. "I just talked to him yesterday, coach (addressing Uichico). It's not a secret anymore."

Menk missed the entire semifinal series because of a calf injury.

Chot Reyes, meanwhile, admitted that Ginebra has the best backcourt in the league in Mark Caguioa and Jay-Jay Helterbrand, and "18,000 other concerns that could help them tremendously in the series."

"It's like playing on the road all the time," Reyes said of the Kings' decided edge in crowd support. "Ginebra thrives on its energy, the energy they get from the crowd that always roots for them." *Musong R. Castillo*

SAN Miguel Beer's Danny Ildefonso (right) grabs the jersey of teammate Danny Seigle for balance as he tries to block Red Bull's Rico Villanueva in their Game 7 showdown Wednesday. RYAN LIM

Conditional POC approval for new basketball group

By June Navarro

THE BAP-SAMAHANG BASketbol ng Pilipinas will get nothing more than a conditional recognition when the unified basketball body seeks the clearance of the Philippine Olympic Committee soon.

It sounded like another snag in the new organization's bid to get the ban, imposed by the international basketball federation (Fiba), lifted but the local Olympic body has no recourse but to follow the rules.

POC president Jose "Peping" Cojuangco Jr. explained that, in normal practice, sports associations first seek the blessing of the international federation before obtaining accreditation from the national Olympic committee.

"Usually, the approval of the international federation comes first before the recognition of the POC," said Cojuangco. "It's like the case of which comes first, the chicken or the egg?"

"Thus, the POC will grant the accreditation on a conditional basis, subject to the approval of the Fiba."

Cojuangco said that the moment the new federation for basketball gets the nod of the Fiba, the POC will then move to embrace the BAP-SBP as a regular national sports association.

The POC has scheduled a special general assembly on Feb. 16 to tackle the matter.

Meanwhile, PBA commissioner Noli Eala said he has somebody in mind for the all-important position of BAP-SBP executive director.

"He is best suited to the position," said Eala, who has counted himself out as a candidate for the post. "But I have yet to talk to him."

Sources said those being considered to the position were former PBA commissioner Jun Bernardino, PBL commissioner Chino Trinidad, PLDT executive Al Panlilio, POC spokesperson Joey Romasanta, former BAP spokesperson Fritz Gaston and former Pilipinas Basketball president Bernie Atienza.

SOUTHERN LADIES

Korean Shin pulls away by 4 points

ILOILO—DEL MONTE MAINstay Crystal Shin continued to shine in the Southern Ladies golf tournament, firing 49 points yesterday to pad her overnight lead to four over Anya Tanpinco and Dottie Ardina after two rounds at the Iloilo Golf and Country Club here.

Shin, the defending individual champion who opened with 52 points under the Molave scoring system Wednesday, pulled away despite a five-over-par 75 in stroke play.

The 15-year-old South Korean shotmaker had a 101 total, four points up on Ardina, the reigning Junior World champion, and Tanpinco.

Ardina struggled with a seven-over 77 worth 47 points while Tanpinco, who with Carmelette Villaroman started the round just one point behind Shin, could only score 46 points on a 78 in stroke play.

Mia Piccio, a member of the ICTSI-backed national training pool, also had 46 points for 95 to share fifth with another Del Monte bet, Lovelyn Guioguio, who shot a 76 worth 48 points.

Meanwhile, Iloilo's IGCCI-I squad ruled the two-day team event with a 206 total after closing out with 100 points under the Stableford scoring format.

Christine Popp led the charge with 35 while Maggie Rivera and Ann Zaragoza tossed in 33 and 32, respectively. Helen Stummer (27) didn't count.

IGCCI-III, bannered by Nitz Goto (36), Sofia Umadhay (33) and Leny Licera (32), finished second with 204, while the Ardina-led NGAP/ICTSI-I settled for third place with 194.

Carmen Griño closed out with 38 points to pocket the seniors crown with 72. Maline Flores (30) and Marissa Vergara (29) tied for second with 60.

RP Cuppers favored over Pakistanis

By Marc Anthony Reyes

THE HOMETOWN CROWD, THE fast hardcourts of the Rizal Memorial Tennis Center and Cecil Mamiit will be the key factors when the Philippines plays host to Pakistan starting today in their Asia-Oceania Group II Davis Cup tie.

"We are doing good and we're feeling fine," said Mamiit, who will share starring honors with fellow Fil-Am Eric Taino in the three-day showdown. "We are confident we can win this tie and hopefully move up to Group I again."

The 30-year-old Mamiit, who captured a bronze medal in singles and another in men's doubles with Taino at the last Asian Games, battles Pakistan's No. 2 player Jalil Khan at 10 a.m.

Taino, the country's No. 2 will take on top Pakistani player Aqeel Khan in the other singles match.

PJ Tierro and Johnny Arcilla will see action in the doubles tomorrow against the youngest of the Khan brothers, Yasir, and Asim Shafik.

Pakistan's manager Iftikhar Ahmad Rao promised an "interesting" tie, although he acknowledged his team's handicaps.

"You have the hometown advantage but we are prepared to fight to the end," said Rao at yesterday's draw held at the Sheraton Hotel and officiated by International Tennis Federation referee Chen Shu.

Pakistan is playing minus its injured top bet Aisan Qureshi.

Rao said they don't often play on hard courts back home and are used to playing on grass.

Pakistan was relegated to Group II last year after losing three ties, while the Philippines came all the way from lowly Group III.

"Let's have excellent tennis this weekend," said Philippine Lawn Tennis Association president Boy Mendoza during the draw, also attended by former Philta head Manuel Misa and Philippine Olympic Committee first vice president, Rep. Monico Puentevella.

MEMBERS of the RP squad (from left) Johnny Arcilla, Patrick John Tierro, Eric Taino and Cecil Maiit hold a replica of the Davis Cup with Pakistan's (starting fifth from left) Yasir Khan, Asim Sharik, Jaleel Khan and Aqeel Khan. RYAN LIM

Amonsot, Melligen seek vacant WBO titles today

SEOUL, SOUTH KOREA—CZAR AMONSOT AND MARK JASON MELLIGEN take on South Korean opponents today for vacant WBO Asia Pacific titles. WBO vice president for Asia Pacific Leon Panoncillo will supervise today's card which is promoted by Filipino Sammy Gello-ani. The undefeated Melligen goes up against Chung Dau in the 12-round main event for the junior welterweight title. In the co-feature, Tagbilaran's Amonsot battles Kim Young-sung for the lightweight crown. Edwin Gastador, sees action in the non-title undercard against another Korean foe. *Salven L. Lagumbay, Contributor*

RACING

BY TOP CHOICE

Race 1 — (Qrt/Tri) — Fair Urduja (1), Seeing Red (6), Gold Collar (5), Detective Daryll (4)
Race 2 — (Qrt/Tri) — Beyond Glory (7), Italia (8), Prince Ferdie (5), Sister Moon (6)
Race 3 — (Qrt/Tri) — Sweet Xarah (5), Ultra Rose (1), Platinum Garden (4), Good Landing (2)
Race 4 — (Penta/Qrt/Tri) — Golden Rice (9), Getting Personal (7), Visionaty/Fear me not (3), Getting Better (6), Kate's Princess/Sheila Princess (4)
Race 5 — (penta/Qrt/Tri) — Virginia (1), Our Sailor Moon (5), Penny Wise (3), Flying Jojie (9), Getting Darker (7)
Race 6 — (Penta/Qrt/Tri) — Silver Eagle (8), Ad Infinitum (10), Last Dance (5), Real Material (3), Pulilan Beauty (1)
Race 7 — (Qrt/Tri) — Golden Sutter (2), Cats on Fire (8), Military Might (5), Gundam (7)
Race 8 — (Penta/Qrt/Tri) — Lirao (3), Don't tell Ella (4), Eye wink (5), Isle on Fire (10), On the Fairway (2)
Race 9 — (Super 6/Qrt/Tri) — Jaw Breaker (8), Taste of Magic (12), Kaori Yoks (4), Half Medium (3), Dream Rose (11), Pure Energy (9)

SPORTSWATCH

Manny among Makati Int'l Derby finalists

PACQUIAO

THE EXCITING 4-COCK CHAMPIONSHIP ROUND of the Makati International 8-Cock Super Derby gets going at 4 p.m. today at the Makati Coliseum with 100 fights on tap. Only five participants emerged unbeaten with four wins each after two days of battle. They were two-time World Slasher Cup champion Dicky Lim, Vietnam's Choi Moy Ngay (Selamat Datang), Saipan's Anthony Marasigan (A2 M2 PS), William Co (Spencer I) and Jay Bulos (Tibo). Ram Lopez (Altuz WTJ) and Dori Du of Davao (BGC Liberty 168) tallied 3.5 points each. Boxing hero Manny Pacquiao (Super Pacman II) remained in contention with a 3-1 slate, in a tie with Boy Marzo and Japan's Kabu Taniguchi (Sabongworld), American Greg Nance (Four Winds), Raymond Velayo (Arnis Master), Alabama's Richard Kelly and Efren Canlas (Bacolor Gold), Jun Topacio (LR Binangonan), Gov. Joel Reyes and Gengen Arayata (Super Clyde and Yce II), Pol Estrellado (PE Sta. Cruz), Marcel Julao (Papa Boy MTJ), Louie Cua (LCC Dumbo) and Butch Inonog (Cam Norte), among others.

Pit Games features Candelaria champs

THE CHAMPIONS IN LAST WEEK'S 40th CANDELARIA INTERNATIONAL 7-Cock Derby at the Iloilo Coliseum in Jaro, Iloilo, will be featured in the upcoming editions of Pit Games and Llamado magazines. Pit Games Inc. president Manny Berbano, nephew of the late veteran newspaperman Teddy Berbano, said that cockers and breeders may also visit www.pitgames-online.com. Hosted by coliseum owner Chito Tinsay, the cockfest drew 181 entries, with 10 emerging as co-winners with 6-1 slates each. They were Nonong Montinola, Banjo Hinlo, Tony Ang and Percy Marte, Boy Tirol, Rep. Claude Bautista and Jorge Torres, Ted Buyco, Mayor P. Alarcon, Kim Mosqueda, Nono Sorongon and Mike Cuaresma and Joven Porras.

Madrigal rules Rotax race

THE YOUNGEST IS ALSO THE brightest.

Shrugging off the effects of a five-month break from racing, 11-year-old Alessandra Madrigal ruled the recent Rotax Mojo Max Challenge Philippines tune-up race held at Carmona Circuit Philippines in Cavite.

Madrigal, dubbed the Philippines' Karting Princess, bested formidable rivals, including two-time Karter of the Year Matteo Guidicelli, European Championship veterans Mark Bumgarner and Stefano Marcelo and her former mentor Allan Uy.

The plucky youngster proved her mettle in the final heat wherein she started the 20-lap race in fifth place, behind polesitter Uy, Guidicelli, Daniel Cleak and Marcelo. The 11 drivers rounded the first turn in a bunch, but at the end of the first lap, the field settled into a bumper-to-bumper line of karts.

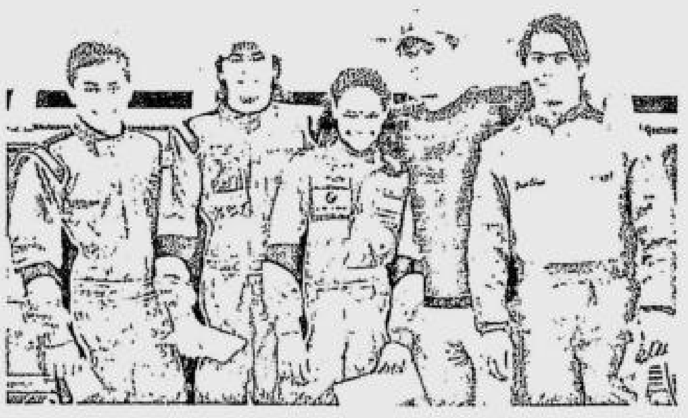
Madrigal then passed Marcelo, who was hounded by a faltering machine, in the fourth lap. Three laps later, she slipped by Cleak and lined up behind Alessandra Racing teammate Guidicelli, who was chasing Uy.

In lap 10, Guidicelli, realizing that Madrigal was pulling more revs on the main straight, allowed her to move ahead.

With six laps to go, Madrigal caught Uy at the first turn.

Madrigal eventually clocked 44.100 seconds—the fastest lap of the race—and forged a 5.8-second margin at the checkered flag to the delight of her new coach, former world karting champion Terry Fullerton.

Guidicelli took second place with Uy coming in third. Bumgarner was fourth, followed by Cleak, Paolo Eslao, Bobby Domingo, Tom Stockinger and Oliver Aquino. *Roy Luarca*



TOP FIVE: Winner Alessandra Madrigal (center) with (from left) Mark Bumgarner, Matteo Guidicelli, Allan Uy and Daniel Cleak.

Heat rise as Celtics sink

BOSTON—THE BOSTON CELTICS suffered a franchise record 16th straight loss with a 91-79 home defeat to the defending NBA champions Miami Heat on Wednesday.

The Heat continued their good run of form with a fifth straight victory and moved within one win of the .500 mark (24-25) with the comprehensive performance against a woeful Celtics team.

Boston (12-36) are 2-22 since star Paul Pierce went down with a foot injury in December and the forward was sent home from the club's recent road trip before he could make his comeback appearance with a swollen elbow.

He is not expected to return until after the All-Star Game on Feb. 18.

The Celtics could have used him on Wednesday, although they did lead by as many as 12 points in the first quarter before a 19-2 run put the Heat ahead for good.

Dwyane Wade had 30 points and nine assists to lead Miami, who are thriving once again since Shaquille O'Neal returned to the lineup from his injury.

O'Neal played just 25 minutes as he continues to recover from knee surgery, but he contributed nine points as the Heat pulled to within a win of .500 for the first time since they were 3-3.

Jason Kapono scored 19 and Udonis Haslem added nine points and 10 rebounds for the winners.

Al Jefferson had 13 points and 16 rebounds for Boston, which has not won since beating Memphis on Jan. 5.

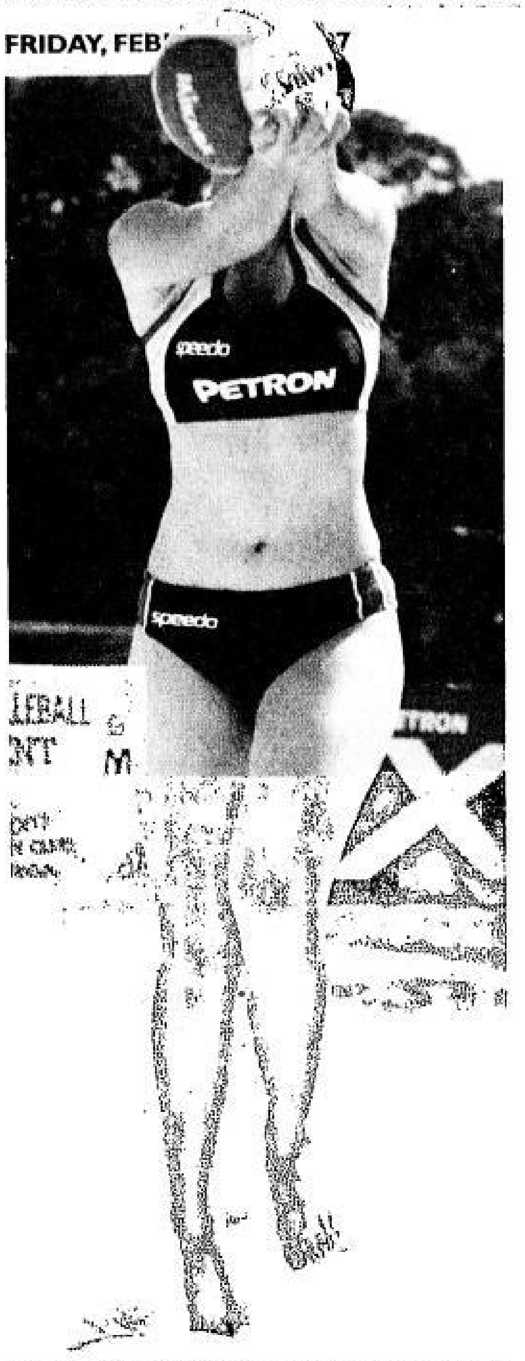
Zydrunas Ilgauskas had 16 points and a season-high 16 rebounds to lead the Cleveland Cavaliers past the Los Angeles Clippers, 94-77. LeBron James had just 11 points for the Cavs, three points off his season low.

Andre Iguodala scored 27 points as the Philadelphia 76ers continued their winning ways since dealing Allen Iverson, beating the Charlotte Bobcats, 92-83.

Rookie Andre Brown hit the winning basket with 23 seconds remaining and Ray Allen scored 33 points as the Seattle SuperSonics nipped the Indiana Pacers, 103-102.

Chris Bosh poured in 41 points as the Atlantic Division leading Toronto Raptors beat the Orlando Magic, 113-103. *Reuters*

WATCH the Los Angeles Lakers vs Detroit Pistons "live" on Star Sports at 9 a.m, with replay at 10 p.m.



BEACH VOLLEY: Bea Pascual returns a serve during the Petron Ladies Beach Volleyball at the Clearwater Country Club in Clark Air Base, Pampanga, yesterday. Pascual and her partner Misha Quimpo, among the favorites, beat the Gel Gepuela-Camille Alcantara combine, 21-6. ERNIE U. SARMIENTO

Tyson checks into rehabilitation program

PHOENIX — MIKE Tyson has checked himself into an inpatient treatment program for "various addictions" while awaiting trial on drug charges, his lawyer said on Wednesday. "He needed to get involved in something that would help him with his addiction," attorney David Chesnoff said. Chesnoff wouldn't describe Tyson's addictions, but police said the former heavyweight champion told officers that he used cocaine frequently. Chesnoff said Tyson checked himself into an undisclosed facility shortly after appearing in a Phoenix courtroom. *AP*

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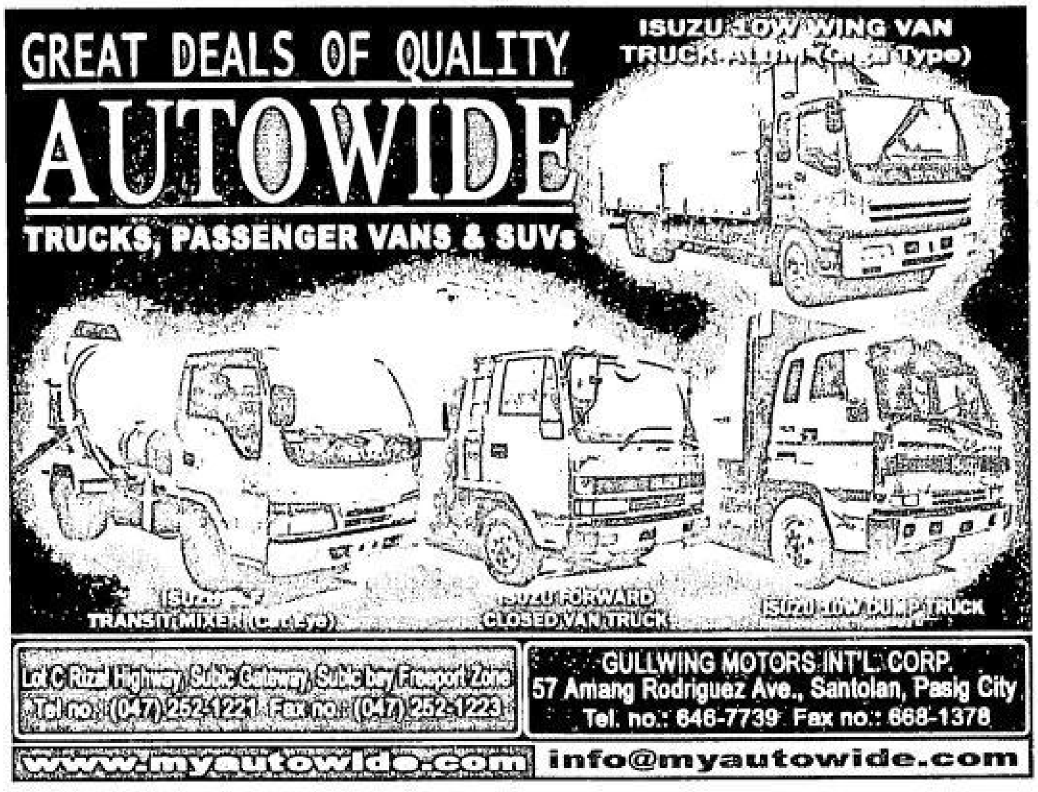

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PAL INTERCLUB

Pueblo, Del Monte all set for twin event

CAGAYAN DE ORO CITY—THE PHILIPpine Airlines Interclub championship joins the busy golf schedule this month with the holding of its 60th men's tournament and 20th senior competition at the Pueblo de Oro Golf and Country Club here and at the Del Monte Golf and Country Club in Manolo Fortich, Bukidnon.

The senior tournament for players 55 and above will be held Feb. 16 to 18 while the regular event will follow on Feb. 21-24.

Canlubang is defending champion in both divisions.

Bukidnon Gov. Jose Ma. R. Zubiri, Manolo Fortich Mayor Socorro Acosta, Del Monte Phils. GM and COO Luis F. Alejandro, Pueblo de Oro Development Corp. vice president-GM Rodolfo Menes, PAL president Jaime Bautista and PAL Interclub chair Domingo Duerme will the hit the ceremonial drives in the seniors event.

Doing the honors in the men's tournament are Rep. Constantino Jaraula, Court of Appeals for Mindanao Justice Rodolfo L. Lim Jr., Del Monte Phils. assistant GM Henry T. Lao, Cagayan de Oro Chamber of Commerce and Industry immediate past president Ruben V. Vegafrancia and Duerme.

Sponsoring this year's competition are Action Asia, Airbus, Boeing, Bombardier, Callaway Golf, 105.1 Crossover, GE Aviation, GECAS, Mizuno. People Asia and Royal Caribbean are the major backers.

www.inquirer.net lead the corporate supporters along with Business Mirror, Fortune Tobacco, Premier Wine and Spirits, and Radio Mindanao Network.

Del Monte pulled off a surprise victory the last time the PAL Interclub, the country's national golf team championship, was held here and in Manolo Fortich in 2004. *With a report from Musong R. Castillo*

KOTR kicks off in Baguio Sunday

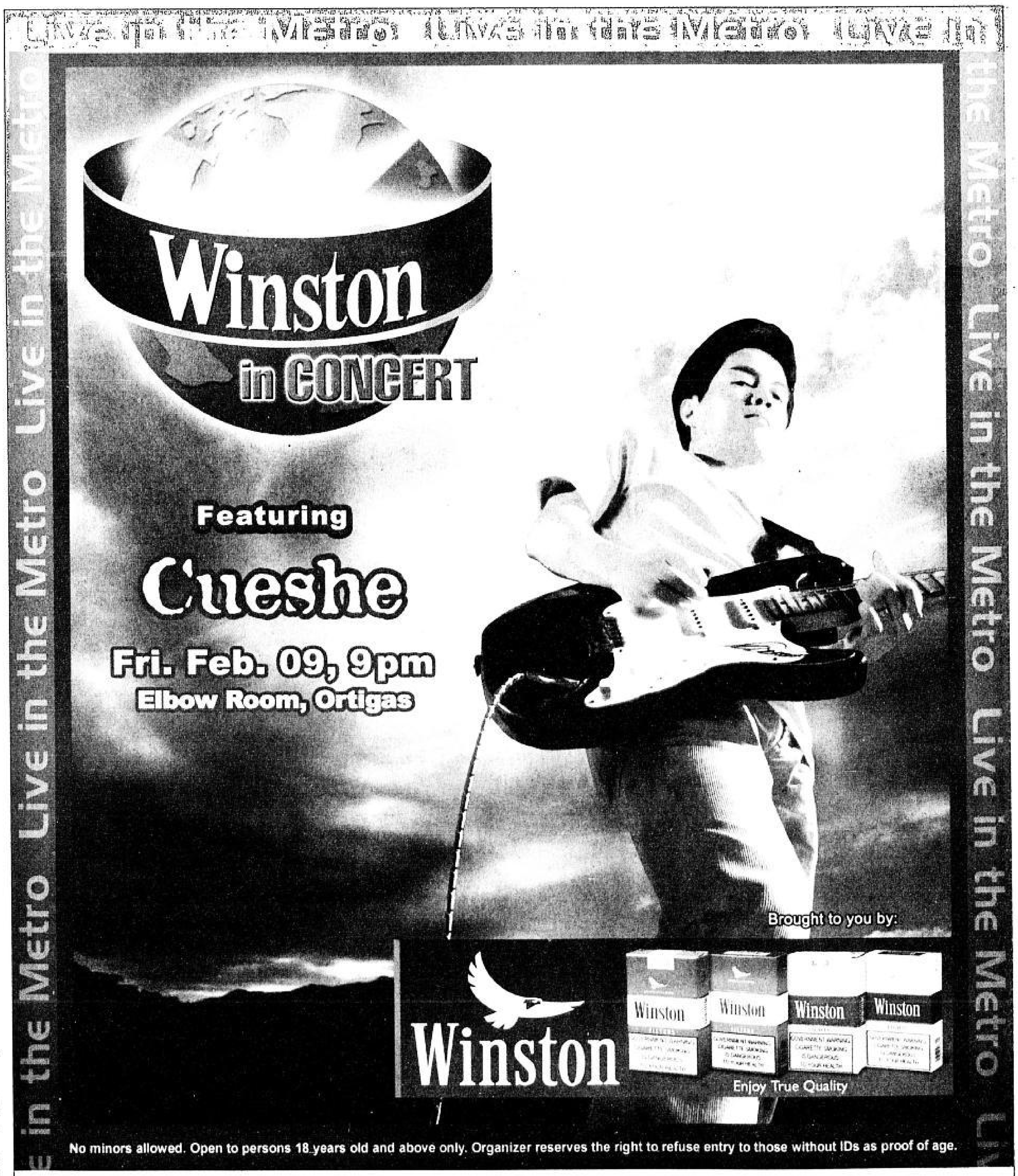
THE ANNUAL ADIDAS KING OF THE ROAD, the country's premiere 10K foot race, hits the road anew starting this Sunday at the Burnham Park in Baguio City.

Local race organizer Leo Arnaiz of Athletes Haven said about 1,500 runners are expected to compete and defy the current cold spell in the country's summer capital.

Baguio Mayor Peter Rey Bautista, who has been invited to fire the starting gun, will join the run.

The winners will receive their prizes from Joey Singian, Adidas managing director; Goody Custodio, sports marketing manager; and Odette Velarde, marketing and communications manager.

Members of the national athletics pool in Baguio, headed by Eduardo Buenavista, Isidro Vildosola and Mercedita Manipol in the distaff side, are favored to win the winner's purse of P10,000.



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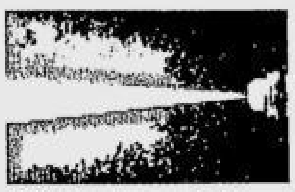
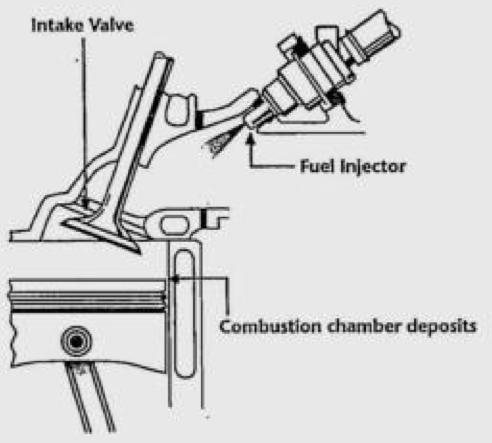
All Caltex fuel grades contain a technologically advanced, specially formulated and patented fuel system cleaning ingredient, Techron®. Thanks to this revolutionary new ingredient, New Caltex with Techron® is unbeatable at cleaning vital engine parts in your car's fuel system, so both car and driver can perform at their very best at all times. In fact, Caltex with Techron® is the first fuel to qualify as meeting the US gasoline performance standard known as TOP TIER Detergent Gasoline, set by the carmakers BMW, General Motors, Honda and Toyota in the United States. New Caltex fuel with Techron® cleans the car's intake system, including fuel injectors and intake valves. Fuel injectors are designed to accurately meter fuel to the engine and to deliver it in a precise pattern of fine droplets. The fuel passages are extremely small and therefore susceptible and sensitive to deposits in the critical regions where the fuel is metered and atomized. If the injector is dirty, this results in poor combustion and poor vehicle performance.



with TECHRON

with Inferior Fuel

Intake Valves on the other hand are like metal doors that open and close at specific times in the combustion cycle. It is the opening and closing of these valves that control the air and fuel mixture entering your engine. If deposits gather in the intake valve, the flow of air and fuel into the engine will be adversely affected, again further reducing car performance. Deposits form on the intake valve when the fuel, lubricant residues, re-circulated exhaust gas or even improperly formulated fuel additives break down due to high temperatures in your engine. Another adverse effect is reduced fuel economy as well as reduced power and acceleration. Unlike some other fuels, Caltex with Techron® minimizes any contribution to harmful deposits within the combustion chamber. Even better, it only takes one tank of Techron® to clean up your engine. Caltex with Techron® cares for your car by removing injector tip deposits. One tank is enough to clean fuel injectors and ongoing use will help maintain a clean and efficient fuel system. Using New Caltex fuel with Techron® has five main benefits.



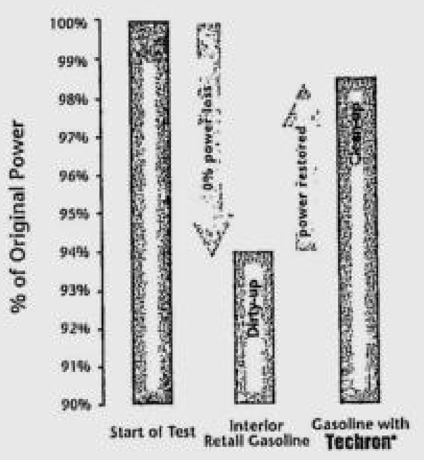
First, using Caltex with Techron® restores lost power and acceleration. The unbeatable cleaning power of Techron® helps give back the lost power and acceleration or pick-up caused by deposit build-up. Caltex with Techron® cleans fuel injectors, intake ports, manifolds and valves to help restore the car's maximum power output.

Secondly, using Caltex with Techron® improves fuel economy. Simply put, a clean engine burns fuel more completely and efficiently, allowing the car's engine to use the fuel more thoroughly, right to the last drop.

Third, using Caltex with Techron® reduces exhaust emissions. Since Techron® removes performance-robbing deposits from vital engine parts, the car will operate more efficiently with better combustion. This will result in lower emissions that should greatly benefit the environment as well.

Fourth, Caltex with Techron® delivers smooth performance. Using Caltex with Techron® ensures that the car's fuel system will deliver optimum and enhanced drivability. This translates to a car being more responsive and snappy compared to a car choked up with deposits.

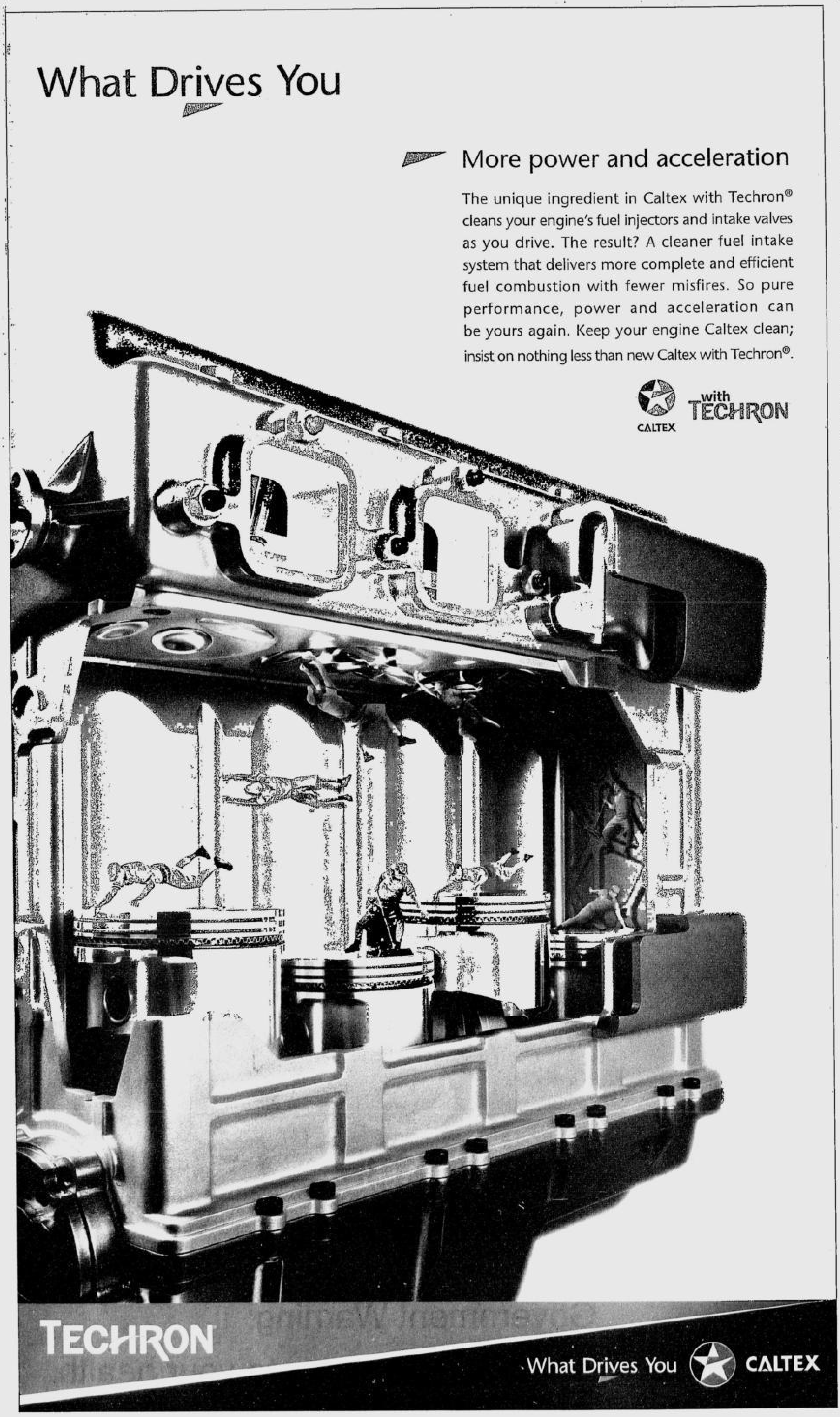
Ford 2.3LASTM D6201 Procedure



Finally, using Caltex with Techron® enhances a car's reliability. To test this, Caltex partnered with the San Diego Yellow Cab Company in an extensive field test which logged over 130 million kilometers to show the improved performance of cars thanks to the unbeatable cleaning power of Techron®.

With all these benefits, what it really boils down to though is that the Filipino motorist who uses Techron® has all the power and speed his car can give, anytime, every time. This is particularly crucial in our country's challenging roads and situations, from enduring long traffic queues and steep inclines to situations where you need to quickly overtake or get by. In these moments when you need your car to be at its best, Techron® gives you the power and speed the situation requires.

New Caltex fuel with Techron® not only gives you a cleaner, smoother and more enjoyable ride... it helps drivers and cars perform at the best of their abilities. So go visit your nearest Caltex station and ask for a tank full of New Caltex with Techron® now.



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IMF sees 5.8% economic growth for RP

Reforms to trigger faster expansion in medium-term

By Doris C. Dumlao

THE INTERNATIONAL MONETARY FUND SEES THE Philippine economy expanding by 5.8 percent this year and moving to an even higher growth path in the years ahead if the government could sustain its favorable economic reform momentum.

In a briefing yesterday on the IMF Executive Board's 2006 review of the Philippines, IMF country representative Reza Baqir said the fund's growth projection for this year was rosier than the consensus forecast of 5.5 percent among private analysts. It was also higher than the 5.4-percent growth in gross domestic product (GDP) posted by the country in 2006.

GDP, the single most important indicator of economic performance, refers to the amount of goods and services produced by the domestic economy in a

IMF/B2

IN THIS ISSUE

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- **RP-China trade** up 17.5% /B8

Vehicle sales down 2.9%

By Ronnel W. Domingo

LOCAL VEHICLE ASSEMBLERS YESTERDAY reported a 2.9-percent decline in January sales at 7,521 units but expressed confidence that demand would pick up in the following months particularly with the upcoming elections.

According to the Chamber of Automotive Manufacturers Association of the Philippines (Campi) and the Truck Manufacturers Association, last month's performance was seasonal and was expected most especially coming off of the seasonally high sales month of December.

"For the year 2007, we expect the positive effect of the strict implementation of the prohibition on used car imports coupled with sustained strength of the peso against both the dollar and the yen," the groups said.

Campi and TMA said that in January, passenger car sales slid 25.4 percent to 2,322 units from 3,113 units a year ago.

However, sales of commercial vehicles—Asian utility vehicles, light commercial vehicles, light trucks, and trucks and buses—went up by 12.3 percent to 5,199 units from 4,629 units.

All commercial vehicle subcategories showed improvements with sales of AUVs going up 9.6 percent to 2,178 units; light commercial vehicles (consisting of pickups, vans, compact sports utility vehicles) by 13.3 percent to 2,804 units; light trucks by 17.3 percent to 149 units; and of trucks and buses by 70 percent to 68 units.

In terms of total sales, Toyota Motor Philippines Corp. kept up the lead with 40 percent of the market. It sold 3,013 units or an increase of 9.9 percent.

Mitsubishi Motors Philippines Corp. pulled in at second place with 13.9 percent of the market despite a 1.9-percent drop in sales to 1,047 units.

Honda Cars Philippines Inc. was third with 11.9 percent of the market with sales reaching 896 units or 6.7 percent lower.

INDICATORS

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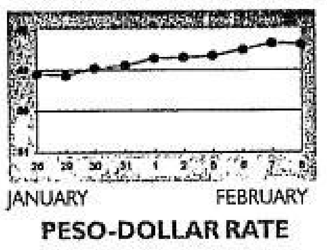

PESO-DOLLAR RATE

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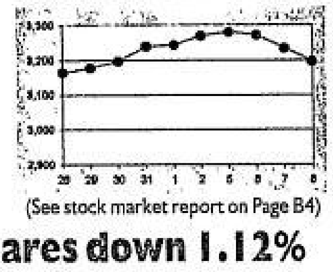
As of 5 p.m., Feb. 8, 2007

STOCK MARKET

PSE COMPOSITE INDEX



(See stock market report on Page B4)

Shares down 1.12%

SHARE PRICES CLOSED 1.12-PERCENT lower yesterday on profit-taking as the market continued a technical correction following recent gains, dealers said.

The composite index was down 36.31 points at 3,196.08 after trading between 3,190.74 and 3,237.38.

The broader all-share index declined 10.82 points to 2,029.47.

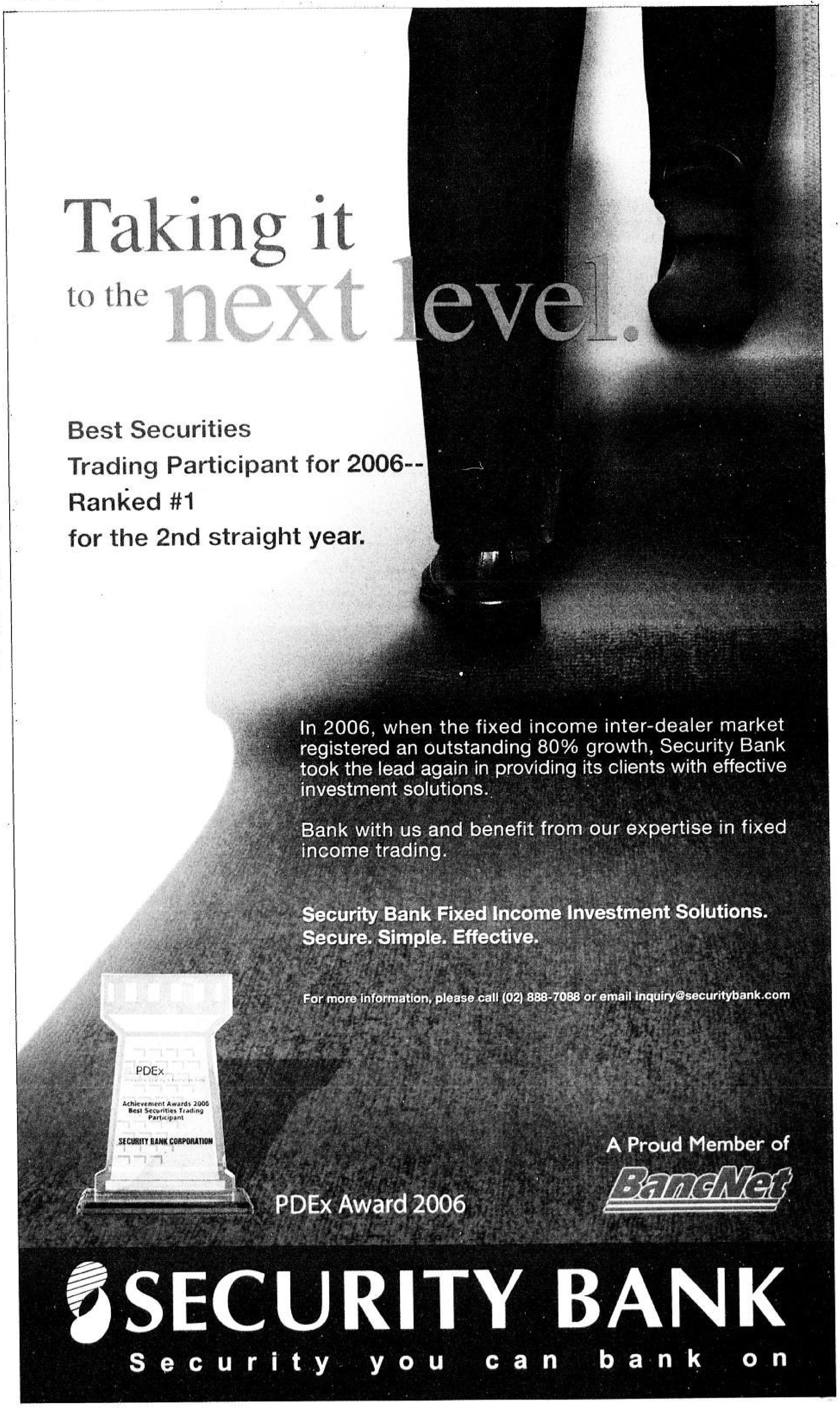
Losers edged out gainers 58 to 50 with 60 stocks unchanged.

Turnover was 4.05 billion shares worth P4.7 billion.

"The market is still consolidating. Investors are cashing in on their gains while some are waiting for more corporate results," said Jasper Jimenez of BDO Securities Corp.

Jose Vistan Jr., research director at AB Capital Securities Inc., said investors switched from blue chips to laggards and smaller capitalized stocks.

Philippine Long Distance Telephone Co. was among the day's major losers, extending Wednesday's losses, closing down P60 at P2,470. *AFP*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DOF finds perks in Tourism Act too generous

Measure seen to result in widening budget gap

By Michelle V. Remo

THE SENATE YESTERDAY PASSED the bill seen to boost the country's chances of becoming a prime tourist destination.

The Department of Finance, however, warned against the measure's repercussions on the state's already improving fiscal condition.

Senate Bill No. 2138, called the Tourism Act of 2007, seeks to provide generous tax perks to a wide array of businesses that provide services to tourists. The bill is aimed at luring more foreign visitors to the Philippines and enable the industry to generate more jobs.

However, the DOF said the fiscal incentives that would be made available for many businesses would erode the government's financing position and might result in huge budget deficits.

"The proposed tax incentives in the bill are too generous. The proposal will worsen the inefficiency of the existing fiscal incentives system and result in huge revenue losses," the DOF said in a position paper submitted to the Senate.

The bill, authored by Sen. Richard Gordon, provides for the creation of the Tourism Enterprise Zone Authority (Teza) to oversee "tourism zones" and administer the granting of incentives to investors.

Businesses outside these zones might also be granted incentives upon the approval of the Department of Tourism (DOT).

Incentives include income tax holiday of up to 12 years, 3-percent gross income tax to replace all other taxes except on real estate, exemption from taxes and duties on imported capital equipment and selected imported goods, and tax credit equivalent to all national taxes paid on all locally sourced goods and services a registered business used in its operations, among others.

Businesses within the tourism zones and those accredited by the DOT will be given these incentives.

Businesses eligible for these perks include those engaged in travel and tour services; land, sea and air transport services; accommodation; convention and exhibition organizers; tourism estate management services; adventure sports services; sports and recreational centers, spas, museums, galleries, and theme parks. Even restaurants, shops and department stores will be able to avail themselves of the incentives.

The DOF said the incentives would lead to revenues losses even bigger than the current foregone revenues arising from the perks granted by the Board of Investments and the Philippine Economic Zone Authority to registered businesses.

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Exporters line up for funds

By Ronnel W. Domingo

THE NEED TO ENhance the country's export performance was made evident as exporters scrambled to get a share of the P280-million Export Promotion Fund even as the manner of allocating the fund has yet to be finalized.

According to the Philippine Exporters Confederation, requests for fund assistance for specific export promotions projects from different industry groups had flooded the Export Development Council's offices.

Philexport said EDC and other agencies that had agreed to pool resources last month to put up the fund have yet to determine how the seed fund would be allocated.

The fund was set up in January in an effort to help exporters keep their growth momentum despite a strengthening peso.

Philexport said a total of 32 requests were coursed through its offices and have been endorsed for consideration by EDC.

Of the total, 25 came from industry groups while seven were from the Department of Trade and Industry's international trade agencies.

Some of the requests were full-blown proposals, complete with project details and budgets while others were statements of intention to seek funding for programmed projects this year, Philexport said.

The fund is intended to help increase the exposure of Philippine exporting enterprises to international markets through participation in foreign trade fairs, trade missions abroad and other direct trade promotions projects, especially those that seek to open or expand markets in Asia.

Philexport explained that the fund was an offshoot of an experimental grant of P10 million that the Bangko Sentral ng Pilipinas put up in 2006 aimed at helping exporters, whose businesses were undermined by the appreciation of the peso.

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Good intentions

By Ernesto M. Ordoñez

COMMENTARY

THE ROAD TO HELL IS PAVED with good intentions. Unfortunately, so is business failure. We cannot let this happen to jatropha.

The response to reports on this subject has been tremendous. Even former Agriculture Secretary William Dar wrote from Africa volunteering his support.

Jatropha a winner

And why not? Jatropha has all the makings of a resounding success. As a raw material source for biofuel, it will reduce our import dependence and save us foreign exchange. It will help preserve our environment and provide hope for one of the largest sectors in the Philippines which is also one of the poorest: the coconut industry and its 370,000 farmers and workers.

To make a significant dent in our economy, growing jatropha must not be left to chance. The globally competitive and efficient scale for one jatropha module is 2,000 hectares. It needs an anchor processing plant to provide the market and an anchor nursery to supply quality raw materials.

Funding

Let us learn from Malaysia's national initiative on palm oil. Today, Malaysia is the world market leader in this area, but this did not happen by chance. Government funding combined with political will was necessary.

In the Philippines, the time for jatropha has come. The coconut farmers now have access to portion of the huge coconut levy funds. These can be tapped for lending to coconut farmers who wish to plant jatropha in between their coconut trees.

This can be funded and orchestrated on a national scale by the Coconut Industry and Investment Fund (CIIF), the steward of a large part of the coconut levy funds.

Competent management

But funding is not enough. You cannot just throw money at a project and expect it to succeed. This is the sad fate of many well intentioned livelihood projects, which usually have a repayment rate of less than 30 percent.

Competent management is likewise necessary. Managing a 2,000-ha jatropha module requires experienced managers with good track record. Hiring well intentioned but inexperienced managers will spell disaster.

Making government officials to run this would also be a disaster. The government neither knows nor understands business. It should "steer" and not "row."

Thus the CIIF management should steer by providing business the guidelines for the jatropha enterprise. Using these guidelines, the business people with their track record can now row and run the jatropha enterprise.

Controlling the enterprise

Finally, the CIIF management must implement measures to control the enterprise in a way that the main objective of giving the coconut farmers a better life is achieved. In previous research that I have done in the 1980s, it has been demonstrated that an anchor project is needed to help manage the individual small enterprises to achieve the necessary economies of scale.

But since the anchor virtually controls the entire project because of the dependence of the small enterprises on it, the small enterprises should control the anchor, instead of the anchor controlling them. But to make this possible, the enterprises must eventually own the anchor.

The CIIF should therefore provide a scheme where the small enterprises should have the majority ownership of the anchor after a transition phase. Though the coconut farmers themselves cannot run the anchor because of their lack of business experience, they can determine the terms of the distribution of profits and benefits. This way, they will be able

GOOD/ B3

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Retirement fund bill OKd

THE PERSONAL EQUITY RETIREMENT ACcount (Pera) Bill, which provides for a dependable and sustainable retirement plan for Filipino workers, was approved in the Senate on third and final reading last Wednesday.

Sen. Edgardo Angara, chair of the Senate committee on banks and financial institutions, said Pera would encourage long-term savings and reduce heavy reliance on the already overwhelmed publicly funded retirement scheme under the Social Security System and the Government Service Insurance System.

"Filipino workers generally look at retirement with apprehension as it translates to a loss of income and the lack of retirement benefits. The absence of a dependable retirement plan could make retirement a source of insecurity rather than comfort," said Angara.

"Take, for instance, the experience of overseas Filipino workers who make a huge contribution to our economy. Their remittances provide for their families' present consumption but leave very little savings for their retirement," he continued.

Under the scheme, an individual can make a total maximum annual contribution of P50,000 to his Pera account. The contributor will be given an income tax credit equivalent to 5 percent of his total Pera contribution.

The accumulated amount can be withdrawn when the contributor reaches the age of 55.

IMF sees 5.8% …

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given period.

However, Reza said it would be imperative to sustain efforts toward the government's goal of balancing the budget while raising priority spending particularly on infrastructure. He added that the low inflation rate environment must be maintained and other reforms pursued to improve the investment climate and lower the cost of doing business.

Baqir said domestic growth "could be higher over the medium term on the back of additional reforms that put public debt on a more sustainable downward path and boost investor confidence and investment."

He stressed that the Philippines' fiscal woes were rooted not to its having low expenditures but due to low revenues.

BSP forex swaps hit $6B in '06

By Doris C. Dumlao

THE BANGKO SENTRAL ng Pilipinas' foreign currency swaps hit an all-time high of $6 billion as of end-2006, as it intensified the use of this tool to mop up liquidity.

BSP documents showed that its outstanding position in forwards and futures in foreign currencies against the peso reached $6.09 billion as of Dec. 31, 2006, up from the $485 million in the previous year.

Excess funds pumped into the economy by an increase in net foreign assets had to be 'sterilized' or mopped up. A BSP official said swapping dollars for peso with various banks was the less expensive way of doing it.

Parking excess funds with the BSP is another way of mopping up liquidity. However, funds deposited with the central bank are paid an overnight borrowing rate of 7.5 percent.

Based on BSP data, $3.72 billion of the outstanding swaps were supposed to mature in January while $2.37 billion would mature within the first quarter.

The highest level of swaps undertaken by the BSP in previous years amounted to only $4 billion, the sources said.

Currency swaps refer to the simultaneous purchase and sale of currencies over a specific maturity date. Over the term of the agreement, the transacting parties exchange interest payments in their swapped currencies. Upon maturity, the principal amount is reswapped at a predetermined exchange rate so that the parties end up with their original currencies.

A forward contract is an agreement between two parties to buy or sell an asset at a pre-agreed future point in time while a futures contract is a contract to buy or sell a standardized quantity of commodity or financial instrument at a specified price with delivery set at a specified time in the future.

In this case, the BSP uses the currency swaps to mop up the additional liquidity created by the strong foreign inflows. It swaps the foreign currencies to prevent the equivalent peso from pouring into the open market, effectively delaying the conversion of foreign inflows into the local currency.

Without these currency swaps, the official noted that the country's gross international reserves would be higher by $6 billion.

The country's GIR build-up hit a new high of $23.76 billion as of end-January on strong foreign inflows from the government's recent $1 billion global bond foray. This was $790 million higher than the end-December level of $22.97 billion and was equivalent to 4.2 times the country's short-term external debt based on original maturity.

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Investments of Variable Life Insurance Contracts	Current Week Feb. 06, 2007	Last Week Jan. 30, 2007
Bond Fund - Peso	1.61663	1.61192
Managed Fund - Peso	1.87246	1.85708
Growth Fund - Peso	1.77062	1.71377
Bond Fund - US Dollar	1.3687	1.3550

* Note: These investments of variable life insurance contracts are not mutual funds. Life insurance products are regulated by the Insurance Commission

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UNIT PRICES (In Php)	Feb. 5, 2007	Jan. 29, 2007
Fixed Income Fund	1.267350	1.265964
Balanced Fund	1.397255	1.364320
Equity Fund	1.631253	1.546275

These investment funds are specific to variable life insurance contracts and are not considered mutual funds. Life insurance products are regulated by the Insurance Commission.
The weekly unit prices are also available at www.insularlife.com.ph.

Sucat plant may be put back into operation

By Abigail L. Ho

POWER SECTOR ASSETS AND LIABILITIES Management Corp. (PSALM) is considering the decommissioned 850-megawatt Sucat Thermal Power Plant as a fallback power generator, in case no new capacity will be installed in the Luzon grid prior to the expected 'critical period' in 2010.

PSALM vice president for asset management Froilan Tampinco said the agency had yet to schedule the plant for privatization, as it could be put back into operation in case there would be a shortfall in supply in the next few years.

"We're still treating it as a fallback in case of supply tightness and if there's no additional supply coming in. There should be a decision on what to do with Sucat within the year," he said.

He said the decision should be made as soon as possible as the gestation period required to put back into operation a decommissioned plant had to be taken into consideration.

One option that PSALM could take, he said, was to bid out the facility, with the condition that the winning bidder should operate two units of the plant.

The new owner of the plant could also opt to put up a new unit, he said. This would serve as additional capacity for the Luzon grid. Converting the Sucat plant, he said, was also an option but this would be very costly to do.

The Sucat plant would also be the anchor load for PNOC Exploration Corp.'s $100-million BatMan-1 natural gas pipeline project, which would enable members of the industrial, commercial, transport and residential sectors to tap the natural gas from the Malampaya Deep Water Gas-to-Power project in Palawan.

Another potential source of additional capacity would be the 600-MW Limay combined cycle plant in Bataan, also a retired Napocor facility.

If it would be converted to gas, he said, the new owner would have to put up around 400 MW in additional capacity to make the plant feasible.

"For a gas-fired power plant to be feasible, it should be generating at least 1,000 MW of power," he said.

Good intentions

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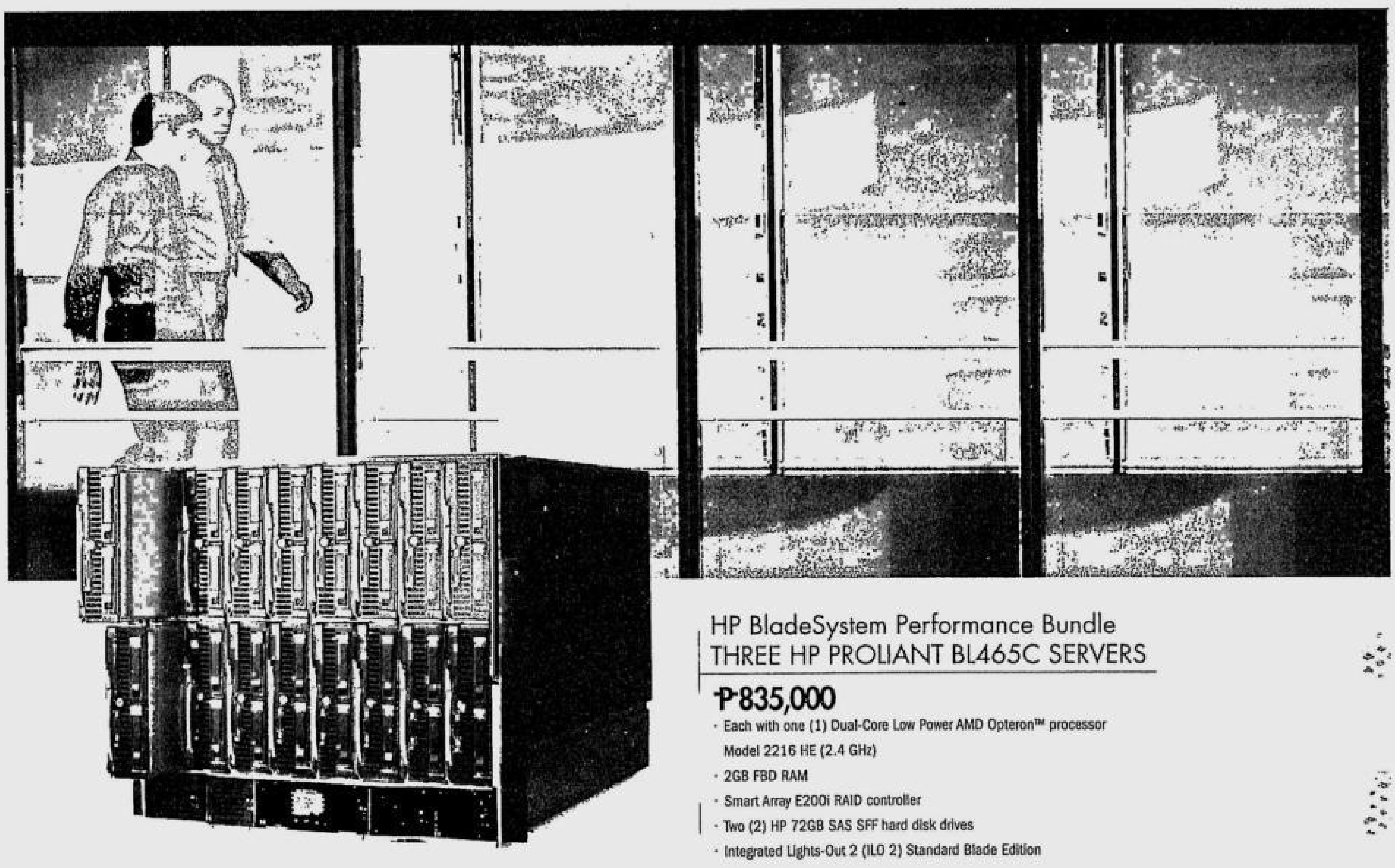
to get the bulk of the benefits.

Conclusion

Everybody wants heaven and business success. But good intentions are simply not enough. It will require wisdom, skill, competence and an anchor project eventually owned and controlled by the small farmers for the jatropha project to fulfill its promise of a better life.

The CIIF management holds the key to jatropha's success or failure in coconut farms. It is hoped that CIIF always keeps in mind that its function is to steer and not to row. We hope to arrange a free open dialogue with CIIF in March to discuss these matters more thoroughly. If CIIF combines their good intentions with small farmers' control over jatropha anchor project, the coconut farmers will experience the business success that will bring a touch of heaven in their current dreary and difficult lives.

(The author is Agriwatch chair. For inquiries and suggestions, email agriwatchphil @ yahoo.com or telefax (02) 8522112).



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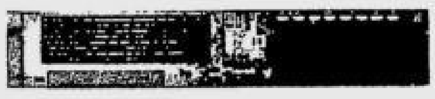

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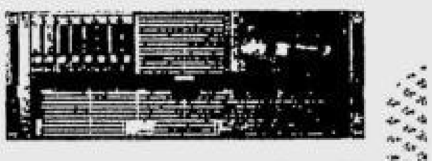

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Jinchuan woos RP mining firm

BIR to check firms renting out property

By Michelle V. Remo

THE BUREAU OF INTERNAL REVENUE is set to conduct nationwide "tax mapping" operations on firms and individuals engaged in the business of rental and lease of real estate properties.

Tax mapping is an audit strategy where revenue personnel are sent to the business site to check on the taxpayers concerned. The procedure includes verification of business licenses and books of accounts.

BIR Commissioner Jose Mario Buñag issued Memorandum Circular No. 10-2007, instructing all revenue directors to focus their auditing efforts on the real estate sector to plug possible tax leaks.

Buñag said the tax mapping operation would cover businesses engaged in the rental and lease of lands, houses and lots, warehouses, establishments used for commercial and business undertakings, subdivisions, townhouses, apartments, condominium units, dormitories, boarding houses, and the like.

Bunag directed revenue personnel to verify the accuracy of the income declared by individuals engaged in the rental and leasing business. Regional directors of the BIR have also been tasked to submit a monthly report on the results of tax mapping, such as list of names that are recommended for investigation.

The move to focus audit on individuals engaged in the rental and leasing business was brought on by the growing real estate industry, which is said to have made a turnaround from the crisis of the late 1990s.

The National Economic and Development Authority earlier said the 5.4-percent economic growth last year was partly due to the significant rise in income by the real estate sector.

Home Guarantee Corp., which provides guaranty to housing loans extended by financial institutions to credit applicants, earlier reported that its outstanding guaranty to housing loans reached an all-time high of P63.2 billion as of end-2006 due to the rise in demand for housing.

By undertaking the audit, the BIR hopes to boost revenue collection. The national government set the BIR's tax collection target this year at P765.9 billion.

The agency is hard-pressed to meet its collection target for 2007. The BIR's collection of P651.9 billion last year fell below its official target of P675.4 billion.

Higher-than-programmed collection of non-tax revenue, most of which were proceeds from the sale of state-owned assets, compensated for the BIR's shortfall in 2006.

After failure of Nonoc talks, China mining giant turns to GeoGrace's nickel resources

By Daxim L. Lucas

LISTED FIRM GEOGRACE RESOURCES Philippines Inc. is negotiating with Chinese mining giant Jinchuan Nonferrous Metals Corp. for a joint venture deal over the former's nickel mining assets.

According to company sources, the Chinese firm's interest in GeoGrace's nickel mining rights began in earnest after talks with Philnico Industrial Corp. over the $1-billion Nonoc mines rehabilitation deal collapsed last month.

The source, who requested anonymity, said that Jinchuan has expressed interest not only in buying the output of GeoGrace's mines but also in taking an equity position in the firm.

Speaking to the INQUIRER in an interview, GeoGrace president David dela Cruz declined to comment on negotiations with Jinchuan, noting that the Chinese firm may have its own confidentiality requirements.

He did confirm, however, that GeoGrace is "engaged in discussions" with potential investors and partners for its nickel mining operations.

At the same time, Dela Cruz said that the firm is contemplating a capital raising exercise to fund its mining needs now that the company's share price has risen above its par value of P1 per share.

"As you know, we can only do capital raising [activities] above par," he said, when asked about the possibility of a stock rights offer that the company had earlier proposed. "That's one of the things we're looking at now."

GeoGrace plans to raise at least $10 million to fund the development of its nickel mines in Zambales and Palawan.

Dela Cruz said the company's recent moves to acquire the mining rights of Saprolite and Garnierite Mining are part of its desire to consolidate its assets under a single firm.

Saprolite and Garnierite are owned by stockbroker Jerry Angping, who is also GeoGrace's chairman.

Company sources said Angping is now in China for talks with potential mining partners, including Jinchuan, which is the second largest Chinese mining group.

"The Chinese are gobbling up all the nickel," Dela Cruz said. "There is a nickel rush going on."

He pointed out that nickel prices are hovering near the $40,000 per metric ton level on the world market, partly because of the strong demand from China for the metal, which is the main element in the production of stainless steel.

Last week, GeoGrace acquired 6,726 hectares of nickel property in Palawan, adding it to the 12,957-hectare property of Garnierite, and the 5,503-hectare mining concession of Saprolite, both in Zambales.

GeoGrace's share price ended the trading session at P1.02 apiece on the stock exchange, from the previous day's close of P0.95 per share, with P219.3 million worth of shares changing hands.

SMIC to hike capital, expand 2 supermarket subsidiaries

PUBLICLY LISTED SM INVESTMENTS Corp. (SMIC) unveiled a plan to raise the capitalization of its two supermarket subsidiaries as part of their expansion programs.

In a disclosure to the stock exchange, the Henry Sy-controlled firm said it would subscribe to "at least 25 percent" of the increase in the authorized capital stock of Super Value Inc. and Super Shopping Market Inc.

SMIC will pump in P300 million into Supervalue, raising its capital from P200 million to P500 million.

The company will also inject P150 million into Super Shopping Market, to raise its capitalization from P150 million to P300 million.

SMIC acquired both firms in 2006 through a P13-billion share-swap deal with their previous owners.

SMIC also told the exchange that it had created an enterprise risk management committee to be headed by company director and former Trade Undersecretary Gregory L. Domingo.

Last year, SMIC secured the approval of the Securities and Exchange Commission to fold in SM Supermarkets and SM Hypermarkets into its retail business, which currently has 29 SM departments stores in its portfolio.

This signals the complete infusion of 28 supermarkets and nine hypermarkets into the books of SMIC.

The assets are worth P13 billion in exchange for 56 million new shares of SMIC issued to the previous shareholders of the two companies.

The firm announced a hike in its capital spending for 2007 to P20 billion from P15 billion in 2006, largely on its tourism and mall projects.

Company executives said SMIC would finance 35 to 40 percent of their 2007 budget for projects through dollar-denominated debts.

Of the P20 billion in programmed spending in 2007, P7 billion would be earmarked for new malls in Bacolod and Taytay, and the expansion of its Cebu, Pampanga, Fairview and Esplanade development at the Mall of Asia in Pasay City.

Also, P7 billion will go to its 5,700-hectare resort project in Nasugbu, Batangas and other property projects, while P2 billion will be set aside for the expansion of its department stores, supermarkets and hypermarkets, bringing the total number to 76.

Daxim L. Lucas

UNDP

REQUEST FOR PROPOSAL

Contracting of Consulting Services for Philippine Efficient Lighting Market Transformation Program

The Development Support Services Center (DSSC) of the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) invites local consultants to apply for eligibility and to bid for the subcontract on International Expert Team on Energy Efficient Lighting (EEL) Lamp Ballast and Fixture (Luminaire) Manufacturing of the project "UNDP-GEF-DOE Project Philippine Efficient Lighting Market Transformation Program (PELMATP)".

The Philippine Efficient Lighting Market Transformation Project (PELMATP) is intended to address the barriers to widespread utilization of energy efficient lighting (EEL) systems in the Philippines. It is aimed at contributing to the realization of the country's sustainable development objectives and its goal in reducing GHG emissions in the energy sector. It will specifically focus on the promotion of EELs energy efficient version of linear fluorescent lamps (i.e., slim tube triphosphor coated), CFLs, high intensity discharge (HID) lamps, ballasts (low loss electromagnetic and electronic) and energy efficient luminaires. The project will accelerate integration of EEL promotion programs to the energy conservation and energy efficiency (EC & EE) programs of the Philippines' Department of Energy (DOE), enhance private sector's involvement and appreciation of the benefits of EELs, and ensure that environmental impacts associated with the widespread use of EELs are mitigated. The project objectives will be achieved with the implementation of specific barrier removal programs that will involve: (1) updating of policies, standards and guidelines on lighting applications; (2) institutional and technical capacity building; (3) consumer education and information dissemination; (4) development and implementation of appropriate financing mechanisms; and (5) mitigating environmental impacts of the widespread utilization of EELs.

To be able to attain said objectives, the project requires the services of a team of International Experts who will assess the local lamp ballast and fixture (luminaire) production facilities in the country and identify processes, equipment and technical / management needs that have to be improved, modified and upgraded to allow for better design and production technologies.

For interested parties, Bid Documents (Eligibility Requirements, Instructions to Bidders and Terms of Reference) may be secured personally, upon payment of a non-refundable amount of PhP 1,000.00 (or US$ 20) for each Contract from the following address :

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The abovementioned Bid Documents will be released to all interested participants starting 12 February 2007 to 16 February 2007 only. The Bid Documents shall contain all instructions on the rules, procedures, dates and other schedules for the pre-bid conference and opening of bid envelopes, as well as further details on the scope of services required.

UNDP reserves the right to reject any or all the bids, waive any defect or informality therein, accept the bid and award the contract to the most advantageous offer to the UNDP, for and in behalf of the Department of Energy. UNDP assumes no responsibility to compensate or indemnify the bidder for any expense or loss that may be incurred for the preparation of bids, nor does it guarantee that an award will be made.

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(PDI - February 9, 2007)

Boulevard eyes Cavite property development

BOULEVARD HOLDINGS INC. PLANS TO RENEW its push into the real estate business, paving the way for an increase in its capital to accommodate the new investment.

In a disclosure to the stock exchange, Boulevard Holdings of the Panlilio family yesterday said it would raise fresh capital for its expansion plans, which includes "the acquisition of additional property for the company's tourism-related real estate development projects."

The company is best known for its Puerto Azul beach resort in Cavite. It also owns the Grand Boulevard Hotel in Manila.

The firm said it had secured the approval of its stockholders for the increase in authorized capital stock from P200 million to P5 billion. The increase will allow the firm to accommodate the additional capital needed for its new projects.

The stockholders also approved the acquisition of a property in Ternate, Cavite from its own majority stockholder, JP Guilds Inc., in exchange for up to 28 billion shares in the firm at a subscription price of 50 percent above par value, or P0.15 per share.

Daxim L. Lucas

Magsaysay opens training center

THE MAGSAYSAY GROUP OF COMPANIES opens today the Magsaysay Institute of Hospitality and Culinary Arts (Mihca), a world-class training facility for those interested in a career in hospitality services, culinary arts and tourism.

US-based Johnson & Wales developed the curriculum for Mihca that features in-depth short certificate courses that aim to equip students with basic and advanced skills in culinary arts and hospitality services. Mihca also offers Tourism Courses certified by the International Air Transport Association.

PHILIPPINE STOCK EXCHANGE

(As of Feb. 8, 2007)

STOCKS	OPEN	HIGH	LOW	CLOSE	VOLUME
BANKS					
Asiatrust Dev. Bank Inc.	8.2	8.2	8	8	84,000
Banco de Oro Univ. Bank	54	54.5	54	54.5	1,126,900
Bank of the Phil. Islands	71	71	70	70	2,430,900
China Banking Corp.	750	775	750	775	10,110
Chinatrust Comm. Bank	32	35	32	35	2,000
Citystate Savings Bank	19.75	19.75	19.75	19.75	400
Export and Ind. Bank A	0.5	0.51	0.5	0.51	4,080,000
Equitable Pci Bank Inc.	95.5	97	95.5	96.5	114,800
Metropolitan Bank & Trust	60.5	61	60	61	5,667,300
Phil. Bank of Comm. A	50	50.5	50	50.5	3,300
Philippine National Bank	47.5	49.5	47.5	49.5	173,500
Phil. Savings Bank	55	55	55	55	142,800
Rizal Comm. Banking Corp.	42.5	43	42	42.5	347,400
Security Bank Corp.	78	78.5	77.5	78.5	712,800
Union Bank of the Phil.	61.5	62.5	61.5	62.5	15,100
OTHER FINANCIAL INSTITUTIONS					
Bankard Inc.	0.66	0.68	0.66	0.68	30,000
Citisecontine.Com Inc.	5.3	5.3	5	5.1	377,000
Manulife Financial Corp.	1650	1650	1650	1650	290
PCI Leasing & Fin. Inc.	1.78	1.88	1.78	1.88	194,000
Phil. Stock Exchange Inc.	485	500	480	487.5	14,460
Sun Life Financial Inc.	2060	2060	2060	2060	720
Ivantage Corp.	1.64	1.66	1.64	1.64	1,372,000
ELECTRICITY, ENERGY, POWER & WATER					
PNOC Energy Dev. Corp.	5.4	5.6	5.4	5.6	32,590,000
First Gen Corp.	57	57	55.5	56.5	2,727,000
First Phil Hldgs Corp.	75	76	75	75.5	696,400
Manila Electric Co. A	71	71.5	71	71.5	99,500
Manila Electric Co. B	71.5	72	71.5	72	4,124,900
Manila Water Co. Inc.	9.9	10.25	9.9	10	7,021,000
Petron Corp.	4.7	4.7	4.6	4.6	10,033,000
East Asia Power Res. Corp.	0.28	0.28	0.28	0.28	300,000
Trans-Asia Oil And Energy	1.28	1.28	1.26	1.28	848,000
FOOD, BEVERAGE & TOBACCO					
Alaska Milk Corp.	3.6	3.6	3.6	3.6	9,000
CADP Group Corp.	2	2	2	2	2,000
Ginebra San Miguel Inc.	24	24.25	24	24.25	109,300
Jollibee Foods Corp.	43.5	44.5	43.5	44	364,900
RFM Corp.	1.38	1.38	1.38	1.38	209,000
Roxas Holdings Inc.	2.7	2.7	2.7	2.7	16,000
Swift Food Inc.	0.44	0.44	0.44	0.44	290,000
San Miguel Corp. A	65	65	64.5	64.5	144,700
San Miguel Corp. B	78.5	79.5	78.5	79	239,200
Alliance Tuna Int'l. Inc.	2.04	2.04	2.02	2.02	657,000
Universal Robina Corp.	18.5	18.5	18.25	18.5	1,519,400
CONSTRUCTION, INFRASTRUCTURE & ALLIED SERVICES					
Southeast Asian Cement	1.46	1.52	1.44	1.48	42,530,000
Engineering Equip. Inc.	4.65	4.65	4.3	4.3	4,229,000
Fortune Cement Corp.	3.3	3.4	3.3	3.4	43,000
Holcim Philippines Inc.	8	8.1	8	8	3,145,000
Phil Nat'l Const. Corp.	5.8	5.8	5.6	5.7	4,000
Republic Cement Corp.	5.3	5.7	5.3	5.7	590,000
CHEMICALS					
Chemrez Technologies Inc.	5.1	5.2	5.1	5.2	2,000,000
Mabuhay Vinyl Corp.	0.65	0.65	0.65	0.65	130,000
DIVERSIFIED INDUSTRIALS					
Active Alliance Inc.	2.8	2.8	2.8	2.8	20,000
Picop Resources Inc.	0.28	0.28	0.28	0.28	14,250,000
Panasonic Mfg Phil Corp.	6.8	6.8	6.8	6.8	1,000
HOLDING FIRMS					
Abacus Con Res & Hdg A	0.011	0.011	0.01	0.01	200,000,000
Abacus Con Res & Hdg B	0.011	0.012	0.011	0.011	12,500,000
Ayala Corp.	640	645	635	645	30,910
Alsons Cons. Res. Inc.	0.7	0.7	0.69	0.69	1,170,000
Aboitiz Equity Ventures	7.8	7.9	7.7	7.9	11,864,000
Alliance Global Group Inc.	9.2	9.9	9.1	9.4	2,516,000
Ajo.Net Holdings Inc	0.0675	0.07	0.0675	0.0675	24,800,000
A. Soriano Corp.	3.15	3.15	3.15	3.15	68,000
APC Group Inc.	0.41	0.41	0.39	0.4	3,130,000
Alcorn Gold Res. Corp.	0.014	0.015	0.014	0.015	307,800,000
Anglo Phil Holdings Corp.	1.24	1.3	1.24	1.24	8,828,000
ATN Holdings Inc.	1.64	1.64	1.64	1.64	43,000
PAL Holdings Inc.	3.55	3.55	3.55	3.55	60,000
Balabac Resources & Hldgs	1.22	1.22	1.22	1.22	47,000
Bacnotan Cons Indus Inc.	10.25	10.25	10.25	10.25	1,000
Benpres Holdings Corp.	3.25	3.4	3.15	3.35	17,842,000
DMCI Holdings Inc.	7.4	7.4	7.2	7.2	1,114,000
Filinvest Dev. Corp.	5.1	5.1	5	5.1	1,609,000
F&J Prince Holdings Corp.	1.04	1.04	1.04	1.04	5,000
Forum Pacific Inc.	0.3	0.3	0.3	0.3	40,000
House of Investments Inc.	3.3	3.3	3.1	3.1	852,000
J.G. Summit Holdings Inc	11.75	11.75	11.75	11.75	667,300
Medco Holdings	0.38	0.43	0.38	0.4	7,100,000
Mabuhay Holdings Corp.	0.36	0.38	0.36	0.38	420,000
Magnum Holdings Inc.	5.8	6.2	5.7	5.9	8,939,000
Multitech Inv. Corp.	2.08	2.16	2.06	2.14	15,310,000
Pacifica	0.019	0.019	0.019	0.019	45,000,000
Prime Orion Phils. Inc.	0.205	0.205	0.205	0.205	1,900,000
Prime Media Holdings Inc.	0.96	0.96	0.96	0.96	40,000
Republic Glass Hldg. Corp.	1.56	1.56	1.56	1.56	10,000
Solid Group Inc	0.71	0.71	0.71	0.71	80,000
Sinophil Corp.	0.165	0.165	0.165	0.165	800,000
SM Investments Corp.	397.5	397.5	387.5	387.5	237,910
South China Resources Inc.	1.08	1.08	1.08	1.08	50,000
Seafront Resources Corp.	1.68	1.7	1.68	1.7	181,000
Wellex Industries Inc	0.145	0.145	0.145	0.145	520,000
PROPERTY					
Ayala Land Inc.	16.75	16.75	16.25	16.25	40,115,900
Araneta Properties Inc.	0.45	0.45	0.45	0.45	450,000
Belle Corp.	1.28	1.28	1.24	1.26	2,066,000
A Brown Company Inc.	1.42	1.42	1.32	1.36	3,851,000
Crown Equities Inc	0.47	0.47	0.47	0.47	110,000
Cebu Holdings Inc.	3.65	3.7	3.65	3.7	905,000
C & P Homes Inc.	2.1	2.1	1.98	2	756,000
Cyber Bay Corp.	0.32	0.32	0.31	0.31	2,990,000
Elb Realty Developers Inc.	0.18	0.2	0.18	0.185	1,590,000
Empire East Land Inc.	0.74	0.74	0.73	0.74	20,990,000
Edsa Prop. Holdings Inc.	1.64	1.64	1.64	1.64	61,000
Filinvest Land Inc.	1.8	1.8	1.76	1.78	236,316,000
Gotesco Land Inc.	0.2	0.22	0.2	0.22	2,730,000
Gotesco Land Inc. B	0.22	0.22	0.22	0.22	430,000
Interport Res.	0.01	0.01	0.01	0.01	191,000,000
Interport Res. B	0.01	0.01	0.01	0.01	56,000,000
Kuok Phil. Properties	0.51	0.52	0.51	0.51	3,870,000
City & Land Developers	2.8	2.8	2.8	2.8	17,000
Fil-Estate Land Inc.	0.85	0.85	0.84	0.85	2,850,000
Marsteel Cons. Inc. A	0.02	0.021	0.02	0.021	1,000,000
Marsteel Cons. Inc. B	0.02	0.021	0.02	0.021	1,000,000
Megaworld Corp.	2.65	2.7	2.6	2.7	11,156,000
Metro Pacific Inv. Corp.	4.9	4.9	4.9	4.9	127,000
Mrc Allied Ind. Inc.	0.35	0.36	0.34	0.36	390,000
Polar Property Holdings	2.14	2.14	2.12	2.14	62,000
Robinsons Land Corp.	17.75	18	17.75	18	5,793,900
Phil Realty and Holdings	0.66	0.69	0.66	0.66	26,080,000
SM Development Corp.	3.6	3.7	3.6	3.65	1,939,000
San Miguel Prop. Inc.	38.5	38.5	38.5	38.5	200
SM Prime Holdings Inc.	12.5	12.5	12	12	4,965,100
Suntrust Home Dev. Inc.	0.62	0.63	0.61	0.63	570,000
Uniwide Holdings Inc.	0.105	0.11	0.105	0.105	3,520,000
MEDIA					
ABS-CBN Broadcasting Corp.	23	23.25	23	23	178,900
TELECOMMUNICATIONS					
Digital Telecom Phils Inc.	1.98	2.04	1.96	2.04	27,846,000
Globe Telecom Inc.	1385	1385	1355	1360	40,150
Pilipino Tel. Corp.	7.1	7.1	6.8	6.8	7,133,000
Phil. Long Dis Tel Co.	2550	2550	2455	2470	253,540
INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY					
Boulevard Holdings Inc.	0.33	0.34	0.32	0.33	6,880,000
Imperial Res.	0.02	0.02	0.02	0.02	1,000,000
Ionics Inc.	2.65	2.65	2.6	2.6	175,000
Island Info and Tech Inc.	0.055	0.055	0.055	0.055	2,100,000
ISM Communications Corp.	0.0575	0.0575	0.0575	0.0575	13,200,000
Music Semiconductors Corp.	1.36	1.46	1.36	1.38	334,000
Transpacific Broadband	2.34	2.34	2.28	2.28	824,000
Philweb Corp	0.037	0.037	0.036	0.037	50,500,000
TRANSPORTATION SERVICES					
Asian Terminals Inc.	4	4	4	4	18,000
Aboitiz Trans. Sys. Corp.	1.5	1.5	1.5	1.5	30,000
Int'l Container Term'l Sv	24.75	24.75	24.75	24.75	530,000
HOTEL & LEISURE					
Leisure & Resorts Corp.	2.2	2.22	2.18	2.2	2,268,000
Premiere Ent. Prod. Inc.	0.36	0.37	0.36	0.37	110,000
Waterfront Phils. Inc.	0.8	0.81	0.76	0.76	4,370,000
EDUCATION					
Ipeople Inc.	3.2	3.2	3.2	3.2	4,000
DIVERSIFIED SERVICES					
Macroasia Corp.	2.2	2.2	2.12	2.14	1,530,000
Paxys Inc.	24	25.5	24	25	2,566,200
Philcomsat Holdings Corp.	1.52	1.52	1.52	1.52	5,000
MINING					
Apex Mining Co. Inc. A	5.5	5.5	5.3	5.3	715,000
Apex Mining Co. Inc. B	5.5	5.5	5.4	5.4	490,000
Abra Mining & Industrial	0.011	0.011	0.011	0.011	288,300,000
Atlas Cons. Min & Dev't	9.3	9.4	9.3	9.3	501,000
Benguet Corp. A 1	1.75	11.75	11.5	11.5	12,800
Dizon Copper Silver Mines	2.6	2.6	2.5	2.55	880,000
Geograce Res. Phil. Inc.	0.97	1.06	0.96	1.02	218,790,000
Lepanto Cons Mng. Co. A	0.28	0.28	0.27	0.27	21,180,000
Lepanto Cons. Mng. Co B	0.3	0.3	0.29	0.29	8,310,000
Manila Mining Corp. A	0.025	0.025	0.025	0.025	134,800,000
Manila Mining Corp. B	0.028	0.028	0.028	0.028	53,300,000
Omico Corp.	0.013	0.013	0.012	0.012	116,100,000
Philex Mining Corp.	4	4	3.9	3.95	2,921,000
Semirara Mining Corp.	18	18.25	17.75	17.75	177,400
United Paragon Mining Co.	0.77	0.78	0.76	0.76	860,000
Vulcan Ind'l	1.48	1.5	1.44	1.46	3,959,000
OIL					
Basic Petroleum Corp.	0.3	0.3	0.29	0.29	2,300,000
Oriental Pet. & Min. A	0.013	0.013	0.013	0.013	369,700,000
Oriental Pet. & Min. B	0.014	0.014	0.014	0.014	331,900,000
The Philodrill Corp.	0.012	0.012	0.012	0.012	877,500,000
Petroenergy Res. Corp.	10.25	10.25	10	10.25	123,600

CURRENCIES

February 8, 2007 Country	Unit	Euro Equivalent	Dollar Equivalent	Peso Equivalent
United States	Dollar	0.768403	1.000000	48.3830
Japan	Yen	0.006367	0.008286	0.4009
United Kingdom	Pound	1.513985	1.970300	95.3290
Hong Kong	Dollar	0.098354	0.127998	6.1929
Switzerland	Franc	0.619031	0.805607	38.9777
Canada	Dollar	0.648606	0.844096	40.8399
Singapore	Dollar	0.501765	0.652997	31.5940
Australia	Dollar	0.598259	0.778574	37.6697
Bahrain	Dinar*	2.038367	2.652731	128.3471
Saudi Arabia	Rial	0.204880	0.266631	12.9004
Brunei	Dollar	0.500132	0.650872	31.4911
Indonesia	Rupiah	0.000085	0.000111	0.0054
Thailand	Baht	0.022534	0.029326	1.4189
UAE	Dirham	0.209226	0.272287	13.1741
Euro	Euro	1.000000	1.301400	62.9656
Korea	Won	0.000824	0.001072	0.0519
China	Yuan**	0.099175	0.129066	6.2446
Argentina	Peso	0.247792	0.322477	15.6024
Brazil	Real	0.368715	0.479846	23.2164
Denmark	Kroner	0.134224	0.174679	8.4515
India	Rupee	0.017460	0.022722	1.0994
Malaysia	Ringgit	0.220015	0.286328	13.8534
Mexico	New Peso	0.070084	0.091207	4.4129
New Zealand	Dollar	0.526339	0.684978	33.1413
South Africa	Rand	0.107147	0.139441	6.7466
Taiwan	Nt Dollar	0.023291	0.030311	1.4665

Source: Reuters' forex closing prices as of NY Time—Feb. 7, 2007

* Various banks in Bahrain as quoted in Reuters' Screen

** Asian time closing rate as of Feb. 7, 2007

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BUSINESS Friday

Five ways to sell to the rich

Affluent finds shopping experience more important

By Karen V. de Asis
Contributor

DON'T LOOK NOW, BUT SHOPping or consumptive behavior is not always meant to serve basic or physiological needs. As one's income and lifestyle improve, social-psychological needs emerge where people engage in unplanned purchases and where the shopping process and experience have become more important than the purchase of the final good or service. No doubt these needs are fueled by today's more sophisticated retail environments and pleasurable buying experiences.

Why shop

Urban geographer and anthropologist turned consumer researcher Paco Underhill invokes retail therapy to explain this type of consumer behavior specially evident among those with money to burn "where shopping or consumption becomes a reward, bribe, pastime, an excuse to get out of the house, a social encounter, an entertainment, a form of education …."

Economists Peter Earl and Jason Potts in their article "Latent Demand and the Browsing Shopper" published in the Managerial and Decision Economics journal affirmed, "Some people may thus shop because their social lives are largely empty: a visit to a mall opens up opportunities for social encounters, at least including interactions with store personnel, if not with other shoppers."

Where rich's money goes

Dr. Yuwa Hedrick-Wong, economic advertiser to Mastercard Worldwide in Asia-Pacific, reveals that among Asia's affluent markets—Australia, Hong Kong, Japan, Korea, Singapore and Taiwan—much of the discretionary spending (estimated at $282 billion in 2004) especially by women consumers is devoted to dining out, personal travel, visiting health spas and other recreational and leisure activities.

In the Philippines, there is a slight variation in discretionary spending—dining comes first, followed by personal care and third is household appliances.

Data on discretionary spending reveals how rising income causes a change in buying behavior and preference from basic necessities to pleasurable and socially consumptive experiences.

Catering to the affluent

There are at least five ways to cater to markets with discretionary spending. These are:

1. Create a feel good selling environment. Consumers with high disposable income often replace goods before these wear out or consume the same type of services frequently than should be. G.A. Katona in his book, "The Powerful Consumers," state that "consumers who become optimistic will dispose of old durables than in a more pessimistic frame of mind, they were inclined to keep using." For example, wealthy silver individuals are likely to spend more than the usual when assisted by highly affable and responsive sales staff and in retail environments that allow them to conveniently browse and touch merchandise without having to reach or stoop dangerously high or low.

2. Differentiate your product or service. Wealthy consumers are attracted to goods and services that go beyond the norm or standard acceptable product or service in the category. Apple Mac is the brand of choice of many among the affluent markets because of its sleek, stylish design and customer friendly feature not found among its more conventional, staid competitors. So with no-sting, no alcohol Oracare mouthwash that has become the favored oral care product among the affluent resulting in the recent introduction of an upsize 500 ml version to cater to its more fastidious consumers.

3. Offer a range of inter-related or complementary products or services to the mother product. Since quite a number among the affluent market consider shopping a retail therapy, consumed by the shopping process rather than the product bought, the buying spree becomes more engaging particularly if there is a sequential mode to it. For example, purchase of the latest designer bag from Louis Vuitton can lead to a pair of matching shoes, a suit, etc. all from the same brand.

4. Create avenues for social encounters and/or education. Many among the affluent market are avid learners and networkers. While this is so, activities must live up to the discriminating standard and preferences of this market. One must note that an increase in the time spent in the retail area is likely to increase the probability that the potential buyer will make substantial purchases.

5. Let your window and merchandise displays stimulate consumer interest. Affluent shopping begins with browsing hence, window and merchandise displays are like tools of courtship that must work hard to acquire consumer approval.

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AS ONE'S income improves, social-psychological needs emerge where people engage in unplanned purchases.

Wealthy Filipinos love to wine, dine

FILIPINOS IN THE "ALTA SOCIEDAD" LOVE to enjoy the good life. Using their enormous spending power, they pamper themselves with things only the elite can afford—first-class restaurants, expensive concerts and shows, branded clothing and accessories, luxury cars, high-end electronic products, and travels to exotic destinations.

With this inherent love of food, drinks and entertainment, wealthy Filipinos have spent a whopping $2.2 billion on dining and entertainment—a big bulk of their $3.5-billion discretionary expenditure—according to data from the book, "Succeeding like Success" by Dr. Yuwa Hedrick-Wong, economic advisor to MasterCard Worldwide.

According to the book, wealthy Filipinos, aside from spending lavish amounts on food and entertainment, have spent enormous amounts on shopping ($670 million), automobiles, PCs and mobile phones ($380 million) travel and leisure ($50 million), and private health and luxury medicine ($110 million).

Wealthy Filipinos, the book said, represent a small fraction of households in Philippine society. The "mass affluent," with income ranging from $15,000 to $75,000, numbered only 291,600 households or 1.7 percent of total households as of 2005 with income of $10.9 billion. But they are expected to rise to 565,300 households by 2015, or 2.7 percent of total households, with $20.1 billion income. For their part, the "rich," with income above $75,000, totaled just 14,800 households, or 0.08 percent of the total households with a $1.3-billion income as of 2005. They are projected to reach 28,600 households, 0.14 percent of total households, in the next 10 years, with $2.5 billion in income. Together, the mass affluent and rich in the Philippines are forecast to spend $6.1 billion in 2015.

How did this segment acquire their wealth?

Most of the prosperous Filipino clans like the Spanish "illustrados" Ayala, Lopez, Cojuangco and Soriano and the Chinese old money families Gokongwei, Sy and Tan, have gained riches through what the book called the "inheritance pathway." This is the route where wealth is built through inheritance, family connections and support.

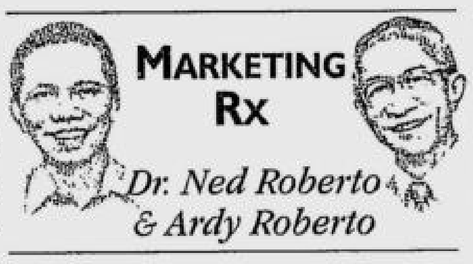
There are two other "pathways to affluence"—the "pioneering pathway" where one creates massive wealth from literally nothing through entrepreneurial energy and successfully seizing and exploiting opportunities, and the "professional pathway" where one acquires professional skills and accreditations to enter well-paid employment—but according to the book, these roads are less taken by Filipinos.

As in the Philippines, the wealthy segment in 11 other markets in Asia presents an enormous business opportunity. Overall, the mass affluent and rich consumers in Asia/Pacific have spent $310.6 billion in 2005, with the largest spending coming from wealthy consumers from Japan ($155 billion), China ($45.3 billion), Korea ($28 billion), India ($21.9), and Australia ($20.8 billion).

And like Filipinos, dining and entertainment has been the biggest spending item of the wealthy in Japan ($40.3 billion), Korea ($10.4 billion), Hong Kong ($4.1 billion), Malaysia ($2.2 billion), Indonesia ($2.6 billion), Thailand ($1.4 billion), and Singapore ($1.2 billion).

Asia's affluent group, it seems, will grow even more, both in number and purchasing power as Hedrick-Wong predicted their accelerated growth.

'If you're throwing out ad recall as an effectiveness metric, why not throw out ad awareness as well?'



MARKETING Rx
Dr. Ned Roberto & Ardy Roberto

Q: WE READ YOUR COLUMN ABOUT ad recall as ad effectiveness metric that's no longer relevant to today's changed advertising media landscape. We were discussing this within the agency and with some concerned clients when a client known for his analytical dexterity raised a challenging issue. He said: "I believe we all still agree that ad recall is a measure of the quality of ad awareness. As an audience response, ad recall comes after ad awareness. If what comes after is bad, then what comes before must be just as equally bad if not worse. So if you're throwing out ad recall as an ad effectiveness metric, then why not throw out ad awareness as well?"

There was some back and forth exchange of comments and ideas for, as well as against, the position that the issue raised. Almost all comments were rather personal stands and others appealed to tradition. None really took "the bull by the horn" and squarely engaged the logic of the issue raised. Will you please let us know your own position and how to better or more correctly resolve the issue?

A: There are several ways to resolve the issue. We'll deal first with what you called "engaging the logic of the issue raised." For this resolution avenue, it's useful to reduce the argument into its syllogism:

Major premise = "Bad fruits can come only from a bad seed."

Minor premise = "Ad recall is a bad fruit."

Conclusion = "Therefore, ad awareness is a bad seed."

From this conclusion follows the suggested action standard to "throw out ad awareness as well."

The obvious confusion comes from the fact that the major premise of the syllogism is flawed. So the rules of logic render the conclusion flawed as well. This is how quickly engaging the logic of the issue dismisses the otherwise seemingly compelling argument of your analytical client.

We should of course not only argue from logic but also from the reality of consumer responses to advertising. One of the many versions of the "Hierarchy of Effects Model" of how advertising works does a simple and useful summary of this reality. Here's the 5-step version of the model. *See Figure 1.*

We've seen some advertising media agencies and their media directors using this Figure 1 version of the model to lend basis research support to their media mix and media schedule recommendations. In Figure 1, the model says that the very first response of the market to an ad campaign is ad awareness (AA). The model also just as highlights the role of ad awareness in advertising's effectiveness process. That's the role of being the consumers' "base response" to advertising.

This is a role that unfortunately has practically been ignored in the discussion and debate about ad effectiveness or, in many cases, not emphasized enough. Being a base response means that the size of all succeeding ad responses up to the ultimate end response of purchase is dependent upon the size of that base. Figure 1 identifies the responses after ad awareness as following this sequence: first the ad recall (AR), then the advertised brand's image (ABI), next the purchase intention (PI), and finally the actual purchase (AP).

Let's appreciate this role by doing the following exercise. Suppose the ad awareness response that the ad media investment generated is just half of what is shown in Figure 1. What happens to the succeeding responses? Figure 2 pictures what can happen.

The "bottom-line effectiveness" of actual purchase (AP) is also substantially reduced. In Figure 2, it's also cut in half. That's of course assuming that the size of each subsequent consumer responses is reduced in direct proportion to the ad awareness response cut. It's the extreme consequence. Usually, the subsequent response reduction is less than proportionate. But the important point to note and consider is that all subsequent responses up to the end-effectiveness target of generating actual purchase are reduced. That's the critical significance of a base response. And so, that's the critical significance of the ad awareness response.

Now, look at what's responsible for ad awareness. Figures 1 and 2 identify media weight (or the media reach and frequency, or media investment) as the responsible variable. If we transform the question "what's responsible" to "who's responsible," we have to admit that they are the media team members in your ad agency.

We of course have clients who challenge this designation especially when they hear us label media weight as media investment. Some clients say they are the responsible source. Let's be clear about this then. Clients or advertisers are the payers. But they are not the ones who determine where (media mix) and when (media schedule) the money will be allocated and spent. And that's the media weight or allocation of the media investment that we are talking about.

Why are we shifting the discussion to the media group?

In pitches for an advertiser account, we've often seen invited ad agencies or those interested in the account, sending their respective presenting team made up only of account executives and creative directors. As marketing consultants to an advertiser, we always ask the presenting ad agency team, either at the start or after their presentation, why their media director and his/her media group are not part of the presenting team.

This is particularly critical in the ad campaign for a new product intro where the A&P budget is not as large as in a P&G or a Unilever intro campaign but is still asked to go after an ambitious entry market share target of more than 5 percent. Let's suppose that you benchmark against an existing competitor brand with a 7 percent or 8 percent market share. Then suppose further that you found that the omnibus data from PSRC indicated that at this market share level, the brand's associated total ad awareness is 75 percent. This tells you that to attain your targeted 7 percent market share, your ad campaign must be able to get your new brand about that much ad awareness.

But let's say that you don't have the media budget that your benchmarked brand invested in generating the 75 percent ad awareness. Is there any realistic way for you to get out of this hairy situation? What can you do to still get a 75 percent ad awareness?

We've witnessed a few "miracle media workers" who, even with a small and limited budget still target and attain what looked like an almost impossible year 1 ad awareness goal. The common denominator of these ad media innovators is creativity in their media strategy, planning and buying. And this is exactly the kind of media experts you need in the above ad campaign situation. It's a situation that's becoming more and more the usual advertiser dilemma.

Do we have this kind of out-of-the-box ad media thinkers around? Of course, we have. For example, those servicing mostly multinational advertisers, we've experienced the likes of Malu Vasallo of Universal McCann. Malu when challenged to do so, does not resort to the expediency provided by the AGB or Nielsen TV data and rating templates for cranking out conventional media placements. Instead, she and her team search and work on the known as well as the new "contact points" of the client's target consumers. New and emerging "contact points" are, for example, the SMS, online games, blogs, e-mails, hobby magazines and e-zines, and the like. On the other hand, those taking care of mostly or many SME advertisers, we've seen the likes of Nilo Choa, an independent free lancing media consultant, design equally creative and cost-effective media packages.

So there's the long answer that your short but insight-challenging question rightly deserves. Though your question was simple because it was just asking about the simple relationship between ad awareness and ad recall, the "correct" answer was not at all simple but complicated. As you can infer from the preceding, the answer could have been also simple had the relationship between awareness and recall been also simple, that is, symmetrical. But it was not. That relationship turned out to be asymmetrical. What is true of ad recall was not true of ad awareness, and what role ad awareness could do was something not true with ad recall.

Feedback at MarketingRx@pldtDSL.net. God bless!

FIGURE I

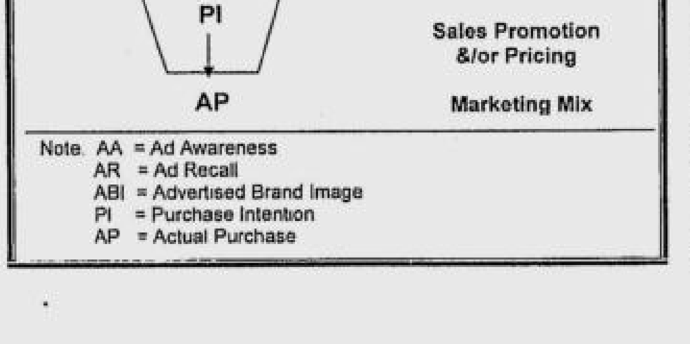
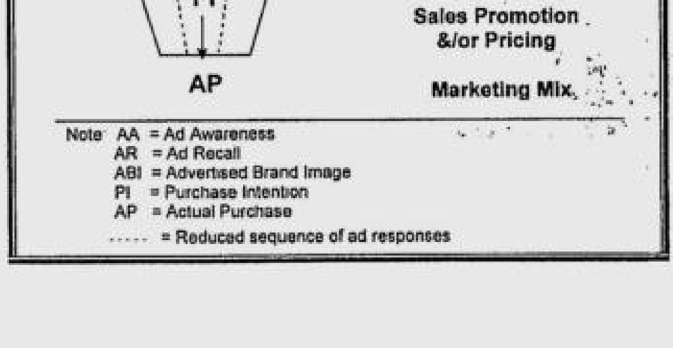


FIGURE 2


A 5-Step Hierarchy of Effects Model
of How Advertising Works
Ad Exposure
AA
AR
ABI
PI
AP
Primary Responsible Causes
Media Weight
Copy Memorability & Media Frequency
Copy Persuasiveness
Sales Promotion &/or Pricing
Marketing Mix
Note AA = Ad Awareness
AR = Ad Recall
ABI = Advertised Brand Image
PI = Purchase Intention
AP = Actual Purchase
----- = Reduced sequence of ad responses

Republic of the Philippines
COMMISSION ON ELECTIONS
Manila

CALENDAR OF ACTIVITIES AND PERIODS OF PROHIBITED ACTS IN CONNECTION WITH THE MARCH 3, 2007 SPECIAL BARANGAY ELECTION IN BARANGAY MONCADO COLONY, MARAWI CITY, LANAO DEL SUR.
x-------------------------x

ABALOS, Benjamin S.	Chairman
BORRA, Resurreccion Z.	Commissioner
TUASON, Florentino A. Jr.,	Commissioner
BRAWNER, Romeo A.	Commissioner
SARMIENTO, Rene V.	Commissioner
FERRER, Nicodemo T.	Commissioner

Promulgated: 6 February 2007

RESOLUTION NO. 7818

Pursuant to the powers vested in it by the Constitution, the Omnibus Election Code, and other election laws, the Commission on Elections has **RESOLVED,** as it hereby **RESOLVES** to adopt, the following CALENDAR OF ACTIVITIES AND PERIODS OF PROHIBITED ACTS for the March 3, 2007 Special Barangay Election in Barangay Moncado Colony, Marawi City, Lanao Del Sur, as follows:

DATE/PERIOD	ACTIVITIES	PROHIBITED ACTS
February 15, 2007 (THURSDAY) – March 7, 2007 (Wednesday)	ELECTION PERIOD	1. Illegal release of prisoners (Sec. 261 (n), OEC). 2. Bearing, carrying or transporting of firearms or other deadly weapons in public places including any building, street, park, private vehicle or public conveyance, even if licensed to possess or carry the same, unless authorized in writing by the Commission. (Sec. 261 (p), (q), (s), OEC, as amended by Sec. 32, RA No. 7166) 3. Organizing or maintaining reaction/strike forces or similar forces (Sec. 261 (u), OEC). 4. Transfer and detail of officers and employees in the Civil Service including public school teachers. (Sec. 261 (h), OEC) 5. Use of security personnel or bodyguards by candidates, whether or not such bodyguards are regular members or officers of the PNP or AFP or other law enforcement agency of the government [Sec. 261 (t), OEC as amended by Sec. 33, RA No. 7166] 6. Suspension of any elective provincial, city, municipal or barangay officer [Sec. 261 (x), OEC].
February 15, 2007 (THURSDAY) to March 2, 2007 (FRIDAY)		1. Appointments or hiring of new employees, creation or filling new positions, promotions or giving of salary increases, remuneration or privilege [Sec. 261 (g), OEC]. 2. Electioneering [Sec. 261 (k), OEC]
February 20, 2007 (TUESDAY) up to March 3, 2007 (SATURDAY)		1. Raising of funds thru dances, lotteries, cockfights, etc. [Sec. 97, OEC].
February 22, 2007 (THURSDAY)	Submission to the Commission by the heads of reaction/strike forces of a complete list of all its members (Sec. 261 (u), OEC).	
February 15, 2007 (THURSDAY) – February 19, 2007 (MONDAY)	FILING OF CERTIFICATES OF CANDIDACY	
February 20, 2007 (TUESDAY) – March 1, 2007 (THURSDAY)	CAMPAIGN PERIOD Holding of barangay assembly and candidates' fora (Sec. 47, OEC).	1. Posting, displaying, distributing, using of illegal campaign materials [Sec. 85, OEC]. 2. Removing, destroying, obliterating, defacing, tampering, or preventing distribution of lawful election propaganda (Sec. 83, OEC). 3. Making any donation or gift in cash or in kind, etc. (Sec. 104, OEC). 4. Use of armored / land / water / aircraft [Sec. 261®, OEC]. 5. Appointing or using special policemen, special agents, confidential agents, or the like [Sec. 261 (m), OEC]. 6. Unauthorized use of security personnel or bodyguards [Sec. 261 (t), OEC]. 7. Construction or maintenance of provincial, city, municipal or barangay funded roads and bridges [Sec. 3, RA 6679]. 8. Wearing of uniforms and bearing of arms [Sec. 261 (s), OEC].
February 20, 2007 (MONDAY) – March 3, 2007 (SATURDAY)	Posting of List of Voters as of August 8, 2005 ARMM elections	
March 2, 2007 (FRIDAY)	EVE OF ELECTION	1. Campaigning (Sec. 3, OEC). 2. Selling, furnishing, offering, buying liquor, etc. [Sec. 261 (dd) (1), OEC]. 3. Electioneering [Sec. 261 (k), OEC]. 4. Giving / accepting free transportation, foods, drinks and things of value [Sec. 89, OEC].
ELECTION DAY	Casting of Votes (7 a.m. to 3 p.m.) Counting and canvassing of votes and proclamation of winning candidates (Immediately after 3 p.m. of Election Day).	1. Vote-buying and vote-selling [Sec. 261 (a), OEC]. 2. Voting more than once or in substitution of another [Sec. 261 (z) (2) and (3), OEC]. 3. Campaigning (Sec. 3, OEC). 4. Electioneering [Sec. 261 (k), OEC]. 5. Selling, furnishing, offering, buying, serving or taking intoxicating liquor, etc. [Sec. 261 (dd), (1), OEC]. 6. Opening of booths or stalls for the sale, etc., of wares, merchandise or refreshments, within 30 meters radius from the polling place [Sec. 261 (dd) (2), OEC]. 7. Giving and / or accepting free transportation, food, drinks and things of value (Sec. 89, OEC). 8. Holding of fairs, cockfights, boxing, horse races or similar sports (Sec. 261 (dd) (3), OEC).
March 4, 2007 (SUNDAY) – March 7, 2007 (WEDNESDAY)		Filing of statements of Contributions and Expenditures.
March 7, 2007 (WEDNESDAY)		LAST DAY OF ELECTION PERIOD

The Executive Director, assisted by the Deputy Executive Director for Operations, the Election and Barangay Affairs Department and the Regional Election Director of the Autonomous Region in Muslim Mindanao are directed to immediately implement this Resolution.

The Education and Information Department shall cause the publication of this Resolution in one (1) newspaper of general circulation in the Philippines and one (1) local newspaper of general circulation in the Province of Lanao del Sur, give it the widest publicity possible, and furnish copies thereof to the Regional Election Director of ARMM, the Provincial Election Supervisor of Lanao Del Sur, and the Election Officer of Marawi City, Lanao Del Sur.

This Resolution shall take effect upon its publication.

SO ORDERED.

BENJAMIN S. ABALOS, SR.
Chairman

RESURRECCION Z. BORRA
Commissioner

FLORENTINO A. TUASON, JR.
Commissioner

ROMEO A. BRAWNER
Commissioner

RENE V. SARMIENTO
Commissioner

NICODEMO T. FERRER
Commissioner

(PDI – February 9, 2007)

Gov't allows Australia's Lafayette to resume mining operations in Albay

By Christine A. Gaylican

THE GOVERNMENT YESTERDAY ALLOWED an Australian-operated mine to resume operations following a 2005 cyanide-laced waste spill.

Lafayette Mining Ltd. had temporarily suspended commercial mining on Rapu-Rapu island in Albay after the incident.

Lafayette's request to lift the order stopping its operations "is granted," Environment and Natural Resources Secretary Angelo Reyes told a news conference.

The go-ahead came after the company passed environmental standards set by the DENR and an independent team of mining experts during a 120-day test run.

Lafayette's Rapu-Rapu polymetallic project started commercial production in July 2005, producing an average of about 2,500 ounces of gold a month.

Reyes, as chair of the Pollution Abjudication Board, signed the order lifting the cease and desist order slapped on Lafayette in 2005. The company has been asked to pay a total of P16.7 million in fines for its environmental violations.

"The order allowing them to operate comes with stringent conditions. These include the implementation of the operational control measures identified by the Mines Bureau and the independent team of experts from the academe, nongovernment organizations and other stakeholders," Reyes said.

The independent team of experts led by Dr. Carlos Primo David (for geology and marine science) from the University of the Philippines and mining geologist Marcelo Bolaños, who previously worked for Benguet Corp., also reported in the briefing that they found the integrity and design of the dam acceptable and in compliance with environmental standards.

Mines Bureau Director Horace Ramos added that the independent team saw through the 120-day test run that Lafayette had made all the necessary adjustments required in the critical mine facilities, particularly the acid mine drainage dam.

The acid mine drainage dam that holds chemicals used in the ore processing has been expanded to 145 meters from 126 meters. An 840-meter long spillway storm drainage canal that will ensure that an accidental spill is prevented especially during heavy rains has also been constructed.

"A weekly inspection of the government team led by the Mines Bureau and a monthly inspection will still be conducted by the independent team of experts to monitor the Rapu-Rapu mines," Reyes added. The Lafayette project on Rapu-Rapu island, one of 24 being promoted by the government to revive the country's mining sector, suspended operations three months after producing its first gold in July 2005 due to the spills.

The mine operations at Rapu-Rapu were disrupted for more than a year due to two incidents of mine tailing spills in October 2005. The company subsequently won provisional approval for a trial run subject to conditions on environment safety imposed by government.

The Rapu-Rapu project was the first foreign-owned mine to open after the Supreme Court upheld in December 2004 the legality of a law granting 100-percent foreign ownership of mining projects.

The Rapu-Rapu mine was forecast to generate revenues of $350 million a year.

Lafayette Mining Philippines president Carlos Dominguez said the company has invested $6 million to further improve the mine facility, jacking up its investments to $100 million since it began operations in 2004.

Aside from Lafayette of Australia, South Korea's LG International Corp. and the state-run Korea Resources Corp. together hold 26 percent of Lafayette Philippines.

Auction of Diwalwal gold project canceled

THE PLANNED AUCTION THIS month of the Diwalwal gold mining project in Compostela Valley has been canceled and the Department of Environment and Natural Resources admitted that this would again delay the development of the mines for another six months to one year.

According to Natural Resources Secretary Angelo V. Reyes, the DENR's Natural Resources Mineral Development Corp. would not push through with the auction to conduct further "clean-up operations" to settle current conflicting interests with small scale miners.

"It is better for the government to clean up the place due to security problems, solve the problems with small-scale miners and other conflicting claims (on the area)," Reyes said.

He noted that he has assigned the NRMDC to prepare a new study by the end of the month for Diwalwal.

Ownership problems with small-scale miners in Mt. Diwalwal have again led to violent skirmishes in the area that, in turn, scared off potential investors, including Harmony Gold Mining Co. Ltd., the world's fifth-biggest gold producer based in South Africa.

Small-scale miners are apparently objecting to the entry of foreign companies to the area.

Diwalwal, a mining town in the Compostela Valley, has more than 30,000 people operating small-scale mines since the 1980s.

The Supreme Court ruled in 2006 that the mineral-rich areas of Mt. Diwalwal should remain under the administration of the government and owned by the state.

NRMDC, the investment and development arm of the government, wanted a strategic partner that will help it develop some 4,000 hectares of Mt. Diwalwal's mineral areas.

According to the NRMDC's initial estimates, the site has a mine life of 20 years.

The area has drawn the attention of several companies, among them Philex Mining Corp., American firm Newmont Mining Corp., Goldfields Mining and Sumitomo Mining Corp.

The Mines Bureau said this project would require an investment of $75 million.

Christine A. Gaylican

Republic of the Philippines
DEPARTMENT OF LABOR AND EMPLOYMENT
National Capital Region
DY Int'l Bldg., 1650 San Marcelino
cor. General Malvar St., Malate, Manila

NOTICE OF FILING OF APPLICATION/S FOR ALIEN EMPLOYMENT PERMIT/S (AEP/S)

Notice is hereby given that the following companies/employers have filed with this Regional Office application/s for Alien Employment Permit/s.

Name and address of Company/Employer	Name of Foreign National	Position
YBM PNT INC. 28/F, IBM Plaza City, Cyberpark, E. Rodriguez Ave., Bagumbayan, Libis, Quezon City	Dongchull Lim	General Manager
E-WORLD TRAVEL & TOURS PHIL. CORP. 1005 Pearl of the Orient Tower, 1240 Roxas Blvd., Manila	Sun Won Hong	Tour Manager
MAKATI SHANGRI-LA MANILA cor. Ayala and Makati Aves., Makati City	Leonis Martijn Keekstra	F&B Trainer
IBM BUSINESS SERVICES, INC. 12, 16, 17 & 18 Flrs., Cyber One Bldg., Eastwood Ave., Bagumbayan, Quezon City	Young Tae Kim	Pre Auditor
KEYMAXX CORPORATION Unit 605 Summit I Office Tower, 530 Shaw Blvd., Mandaluyong City	Sun Cheol Kim	Keymaxx Cam Engineer
HINDUJA TMT, LTD. 86 E. Rodriguez Jr., Ave., Bo. Ugong, Brgy. Norte, Quezon City	Pushkar Misra	President
ASIANA AIRLINES, INC. 6/F, Salcedo Towers, dela Costa St., Salcedo Village, Makati City	Jung Gu Shin	Senior Technician
YBM PNT INC. 28/F, IBM Plaza City, Cyberpark, E. Rodriguez Ave., Bagumbayan, Libis, Quezon City	Hee Young Lee	Manager
YBM PNT INC. 28/F, IBM Plaza City, Cyberpark, E. Rodriguez Ave., Bagumbayan, Libis, Quezon City	So Hyun Park	Assistant Manager
YBM PNT INC. 28/F, IBM Plaza City, Cyberpark, E. Rodriguez Ave., Bagumbayan, Libis, Quezon City	Jun Hyong Yang	Technical Supervisor
CHINA AIRLINES, LTD. G/F Unit-1, Golden Empire Tower, 1322 Roxas Blvd., cor. Padre Faura St., Ermita, Manila	Yi-Chou Lee a.k.a. Solomon Lee	General Manager
CHINA AIRLINES, LTD. G/F Unit-1, Golden Empire Tower, 1322 Roxas Blvd., cor. Padre Faura St., Ermita, Manila	Chun-Yuan Chiang	Maintenance Manager
HANKOOK AIR SERVICES INC. Units 101 & 102 Tordesillas St., Salcedo Village, Makati City	Jong Eun Yoon	General Manager
IBM BUSINESS SERVICES INC. 12, 16, 17 & 18th Flrs., Cyber One Bldg., #11 Eastwood Ave., Bagumbayan, Quezon, City	Kunihisa Onita	Pre Auditor
ALABANG FORTUNE-EIGHT GLOBAL SCHOOL INC. Unit 1002 Alabang Business Tower, Acacia Ave., Muntinlupa City	Heejeong Kim	Managing Director
PHIL-KYOYOOK NARA INC. U-SW-113 Goldloop Twin Towers, J.M. Escriva Dr., Ortigas Ctr., Pasig City	Hsun Sil Jung (w/o Lee)	Director

If you have any information/objection to the abovementioned application/s please communicate with the Regional Director.

f:
LOURDES M. TRASMONTE
Regional Director

(PDI - Feb. 9, 2007)

NATIONAL FOOD AUTHORITY
Philippine Sugar Center Bldg., North Ave., Diliman, Quezon City
Tel No. (02) 454-0254 Website: www.nfa.gov.ph

ANNOUNCEMENT OF BIDDING

In consonance with Republic Act 9184, the National Food Authority (NFA) wishes to announce that it will be conducting a bidding on **February 28, 2007 at 10:00 a.m.** at the **Sugar Regulatory Administration (SRA) Social Hall, North Avenue, Diliman, Quezon City**, among all interested rice suppliers for the supply of **550,000 MT, 10% MOLSO, 25% brokens and 30,000 MT, 10% MOLSO, 15% brokens, well-milled long grain white rice with arrival period as follows:**

Arrival Period	Quantity for Delivery
25% Brokens	
March 2007	At least 5%
April 2007	At least 30%
May 2007	At least 50%
June 2007	Balance
15% Brokens	
May 2007	At least 50%
June 2007	Balance

Packing shall be in fifty (50) kilograms net each in polypropylene bags suitable for rice export with NFA markings with an appropriated budget from corporate resources, as follows

Amount	Specification	Quantity (MT)10% MOLSO
Php 9.309B	25% brokens	550,000
Php 0.524B	15% brokens	30,000

Containerized shipment allowed but only up to a maximum volume of 15,000 MT. Source countries shall be Thailand, Vietnam, China, Pakistan, India, Australia and/or U.S.

All interested suppliers are to submit mandatory quotations for the 25% brokens and 15% brokens long grain white rice in US$/MT, CFR, FO, Documents against Acceptance (D/A) with a tenor of one hundred twenty (120) days from receipt by NFA of the complete set of original documents required for payment and on the basis of mandatory countertrade and countertrade performed on best effort. Otherwise, bids shall be considered non-responsive. Maximum quantity to be awarded for India origin is 25,000 MT while for Pakistan, Australia and/or U.S. origin shall be 50,000 MT each.

Government and private suppliers who have delivered to the NFA within the last three (3) years (2004, 2005 and 2006) and do not have a bad track record may be awarded the following maximum volume:

SUPPLIER	VOLUME (MT)
Government (with good track record)	300,000
Private (with good track record)	50,000
Government/Private (without track record)	25,000

Minimum volume to be offered per supplier shall be 10,000 MT per specification. Offerors shall indicate the minimum volume acceptable in case of award. Failure to do so, shall mean acceptance of the Seller the awarded volume. Maximum load capacity of vessel shall be 15,000 MT.

However, suppliers and/or source companies with pending import-related accounts/liability prior 2004 are considered to have bad track record and are not allowed to participate in the bid.

All bidders are required to post a bid bond equivalent to 3% of the highest value offered in the form of cashier's/manager's check issued by a reputable bank in Metro Manila or an irrevocable standby Letter of Credit issued by a reputable commercial bank or in the case of an irrevocable stand-by L/C issued by a foreign bank, the same shall be confirmed by a reputable local bank.

Winning bidders are required to submit a performance bond equivalent to 10% of the value of the awarded volume within five (5) banking days after receipt of the notice of award in the form of cashier's/manager's check issued by a reputable bank in Metro Manila or an irrevocable standby Letter of Credit issued by a reputable commercial bank or in the case of an irrevocable stand-by L/C issued by a foreign bank, the same shall be confirmed by a reputable local bank.

List of Eligibility Requirements and Instructions to Bidders maybe secured starting **February 09, 2007** thru **MR. PIOLITO C. SANTOS,** Assistant Department Manager and **MR. NESTOR U. PUANGCO,** Division Chief III, **Directorate for Marketing Operations, 4th Floor, Left Wing, Philippine Sugar Center Building, North Avenue, Diliman, Quezon City with telephone numbers 920-0651, 454-1890, 426-0569 and 454-1214.**

The terms of reference and offer sheets will be available from **February 09-26, 2007** (8:00 a.m - 5:00 p.m.) upon payment of a non-refundable fee of ₱10,000.00.

The **pre-bidding conference** will be held on **February 15, 2007 at 10:00 a.m.** at **the Sugar Regulatory Administration (SRA) Social Hall, North Avenue, Diliman, Quezon City.**

Submission of bids will be on February 28, 2007 between 8:00 a.m. to 9:55 a.m. at the Sugar Regulatory Administration (SRA) Social Hall, North Avenue, Diliman, Quezon City. Opening of bids will start at exactly **10:00 a.m.**

All bidders are required to read and comply with the Instruction to bidders.

The National Food Authority reserves the right to reject any or all bid proposals, to waive any required formality or defect therein and may accept the bid/s which is deemed most advantageous to the Agency.

(Sgd) **LUDOVICO J. JARINA**
Deputy Administrator and
Chairman, BAC

(PDI - Feb 9 2007)

TransCo
National Transmission Corporation

INVITATION TO APPLY FOR ELIGIBILITY AND TO BID

The National Transmission Corporation (TransCo), through its Bids and Awards Committee (BAC), invites contractors registered with and classified by the Philippine Contractors Accreditation Board (PCAB) to apply for eligibility and if found eligible, to bid for the hereunder contract:

Name of Contract	:	**PB2061127-LEO148/ PR No. PPID-06-000017008 Construction of RF Building and Design, Fabrication, Supply and Delivery of Sixty-Six (66) Meters MW Towers at Hermosa S/S**
Approved Budget for the Contract (ABC)	:	**P15,419,181.00**
Contract Duration	:	**One Hundred Fifty (150) Calendar Days from the receipt of the approved Contract/Notice to Proceed.**

Prospective bidders should possess a valid PCAB License applicable to the contract, have completed a similar contract with a value of at least 50% of the ABC, and have key personnel and equipment (listed in the Eligibility Forms) available for the prosecution of the contract. The BAC will use non-discretionary pass/fail criteria in the Eligibility Check/Screening as well as the Preliminary Examination of Bids. The BAC will conduct post-qualification of the lowest calculated bid. Award shall be on per schedule basis.

All particulars relative to Eligibility Statement and Screening, Bid Security, Performance Security, Pre-Bidding Conference, Evaluation of Bids, Post-Qualification and Award of Contract shall be governed by the pertinent provisions of R.A. 9184 and its Implementing Rules and Regulation (IRR).

The schedule of BAC activities is as follows:

BAC Activities	Schedule
1. Issuance of Eligibility Documents	February 12, 2007 to February 19, 2007
2. Deadline of Receipt and Opening of Eligibility Requirements	February 20, 2007 at 10:00 a.m.
3. Notice of Results of Eligibility Check	February 23, 2007
4. Issuance of Bid Documents	February 26, 2007 to March 16, 2007 from 9:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m.
5. Pre-bid Conference	March 7, 2007 at 10:00 a.m.
6. Deadline of Receipt and Opening of Bids	March 19, 2007 at 10:00 a.m.

The BAC will issue to prospective bidders Eligibility Forms at Ground Floor, TransCo Main Building, Power Center, Quezon Avenue Corner BIR Road, Diliman, Quezon City, upon their submission of a LOI, and upon their payment of a non-refundable amount of **ONE THOUSAND Pesos (P1,000.00)** to the TransCo Cashier. Prospective bidders shall submit the Eligibility Requirements to the BAC at the said address. They may also obtain the results of the Eligibility Check by the BAC at the same address.

The BAC will issue Bidding Documents only to bidders declared by the BAC to be eligible for the bidding upon payment of a non-refundable amount of **TWO THOUSAND Pesos (P2,000.00)** to the TransCo Cashier.

TransCo assumes no responsibility whatsoever to compensate or indemnify bidders for any expenses incurred in the preparation of their bids.

(Sgd.) **OSCAR M. CAMERINO**
Chairman
Bids and Awards Committee - II

(PDI - Feb. 9, 2007)

NATIONAL FOOD AUTHORITY
Baloy, Cagayan de Oro City
Regional Office 10
R010-2007-001

INVITATION TO BID FOR THE SALE OF ONE (1) SET OF BUTLER SILO "AS IS WHERE IS"

The *National Food Authority, Region 10*, through its Disposal Committee (BAC), will conduct Public Bidding for the Sale of One (1) Set Butler Silo located at NFA Warehouse Compound, Aglayan, Malaybalay City, Bukidnon.

Brief Description of. The Asset	:	One (1) Set Steel Butler Silo having a total estimated capacity of 30,000 bags of 50 kg corn equipped with receiving, drying, conveying, storage tanks and 94 KVA/75 KW Allis Chalmer generating set.
Minimum Bid Price	:	**FOUR HUNDRED SIXTY FOUR THOUSAND FIVE HUNDRED EIGHTY EIGHT & 42/100 PESOS (P464,588.42)**

The complete schedule of activities is listed, as follows:

ACTIVITIES	ADDRESS	DATE	TIME
1. Issuance of Bid Documents	2F, NFA-10 Regional Office, Baloy, Cagayan de Oro City	February 9-19, 2007	8:00 AM - 2:00 PM Working days
2. Pre-Bid Conference	Conference Room 2F NFA-10 Regional Office, Baloy, Cagayan de Oro City	February 20, 2007	2:00 PM
3. Deadline for Submission & Receipt of Bid Documents	Conference Room, 2F NFA-10 Regional Office, Baloy, Cagayan de Oro City	March 5, 2007	2:00 PM
4. Opening of Bids	Conference Room, 2F NFA-10 Regional Office, Baloy, Cagayan de Oro City	March 5, 2007	2:05 PM

Bid Forms will be available only to interested parties upon presentation of Letter of Intent bearing the correct name that will participate in the bidding and upon payment of a non-refundable, non-transferable bidding fee in the amount of **TWO THOUSAND PESOS (P2,000.00)** to the Cashier of NFA, Baloy, Cagayan de Oro City. Representatives of Bidder purchasing the Bid Documents must be equipped with a Special Power of Attorney to purchase the documents in behalf of the Bidder.

Interested bidder/buyer can inspect the described asset during office hours at said location.

For further inquiries, interested parties may see or call Ms. Emma P. Asiñero at the 2nd Floor, NFA Regional Office Building, Baloy, Cagayan de Oro City with telephone nos. (088) 855-2721 / (08822) 732-215.

NFA Region 10 assumes no responsibility whatsoever to compensate or indemnify bidders for any expenses incurred in the preparation of the Bid.

The NFA Region 10 reserves the right to accept or reject any Bid and to annul the bidding process and reject all Bids at anytime prior to contract award, without thereby incurring any liability to the Bidders.

(Sgd.) **CAMILO D. MAGTRAYO**
Asst. Regional Director/
Chairman, Disposal Committee

(PDI - Feb. 9, 2007)

BUYING
ROLEX • Patek Philippe • AP
Panerai • IWC • Omega • Cartier
Also Diamonds and unusual watches
09178884040
7269687
email: worldwatch@gmail.com

PROFESSIONAL & CREDIBLE
PAWN*BUY*SELL
WATCHES
Jewelry & Diamonds
BEST APPRAISAL
Secondo Glorietta 1
Tel# 894-0282
Agencia de Makati
Tel# 889-7956

BUY * SELL * PAWN
WATCHES JEWELRY DIAMONDS
BEST OFFER
IN TOWN
844-2995
8040484
887-2888 loc 3544

WE BUY!!!
Jewelry, Diamonds,
Rolex, Pawn tickets &
other Swiss Watches
Fast Cash
0927-7078888

POEA
24-HR HOTLINES
722-1144
722-1155

JOB Market
Read it every Sunday with the Philippine Daily Inquirer.

Provincial Government of Bukidnon

Project Reference Number
Name of the Project
Location of the Project

Standard Form Number: SF-GOOD-05
Revised on: July 28, 2004

INVITATION TO APPLY FOR ELIGIBILITY AND TO BID

The Provincial Government of Bukidnon through its Bids and Awards Committee (BAC), invites suppliers/manufacturers/distributors/contractors to apply for eligibility and to bid for the hereunder projects:

Name of Project
Project I: Reference #300-07-10 : **Supply & Delivery of Various Construction Materials for Talakag Water System Project : F.O.B. Talakag, Bukidnon**
Project II: Reference #300-07-11 : **1 Contract: Furnishing of Labor for the construction of Talakag Water System including hauling of Construction Materials to the Jobsite**

Description/Location of the Project
Project I : For the Construction of Talakag Water System, Talakag, Bukidnon
Project II : Scope of Work

1. Construction of 1 unit intake box (1,000 gals capacity)
2. Installation of Transmission/Distribution lines and fittings
3. Construction of River Crossing structure
4. Construction of one (1) Ground Reservoir (26,000 gals. capacity)
5. Construction of 2 units Ground Reservoir (6,000 gals. capacity)

Approved Budget for the Contract
Project I : **Twenty Two Million Nine Hundred Two Thousand Three Hundred Twenty Four Pesos and Fifty Three Centavos (P22,902,324.53)**
Project II : **Four Million Three Hundred Eighty One Thousand Seven Hundred Twenty One Pesos and Seven Centavos (P4,381,721.07)**

Project Completion/Duration
Project I : Fifteen (15) Calendar Days upon receipt of Notice to Proceed
Project II : Two Hundred (200) Calendar upon receipt of Notice to Proceed

Prospective bidders should have experience in undertaking a similar project within the last 2 years with an amount of at least 50% of the proposed project for bidding. The Eligibility Check/Screening as well as the Preliminary Examination of Bids shall use non-discretionary "pass/fail" criteria. Post-qualification of the lowest calculated bid shall be conducted.

All particulars relative to Eligibility Statement and Screening, Bid Security, Pre-Bidldng Conference Performance Security, Evaluation of Bids, Post-Qualification and Award of Contract shall be governed by the pertinent provisions of R.A. 9184 and its Implementing Rules and Regulation (IRR).

The complete schedule of activities is listed, as follows:

Activities	Schedule	Venue
1. Advertisement	February 2-February 13, 2007	Provincial Website, GEPS, Vicinity of PGSO, PGO, PTO & BAC Office
2. Issuance of Bid Documents	February 12-13, 2007	BAC Conference Room, Provincial Capitol, Malaybalay City
3. Pre-Bidding Conference	February 14, 2007, 2:00 p.m.	BAC Conference Room, Provincial Capitol, Malaybalay City
4. Opening of Bids Deadline for Submission of Bids	February 21, 2007, 2:00 p.m. Not later than 2:00 p.m.	BAC Conference Room, Provincial Capitol, Malaybalay City
5. Bid Evaluation	February 23, 2007	BAC Conference Room, Provincial Capitol, Malaybalay City
6. Post Qualification	February 26, 2007	BAC Conference Room, Provincial Capitol, Malaybalay City
7. Notice of Award	March 1, 2007	BAC Conference Room, Provincial Capitol, Malaybalay City

Bid documents will be available to prospective bidders upon payment of non-refundable Bid documents fee in the amount of Five Thousand Pesos (P5,000.00) for Project I and Three Thousand Pesos (P3,000.00) for Project II. For inquiry, please call Telephone Nos. 088-221-2537 and 088-221-4820.

The Provincial Government of Bukidnon assumes no responsibility whatsoever to compensate or indemnify bidders for any expenses incurred in the preparation of the bid.

Approved:
(Sgd.) JOSEFREDIE F. FLORES
BAC Chairman

(PDI–Feb. 3 & 9, 2007)

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For you are at my side, your road and staff give me courage..."
Psalm 23:4

RUDY GERARDO ALBORNOZ

of Laoag and Pasig City.

Peacefully passed away in the Grace of our Lord on February 5, 2007 at the age of 65.

His beloved wife **Glenna**; his children **Rene & Cherry, Amii, Romy & Mitzi** and grandchildren **Dasha & Kit, Lauren & Amber** give thanks to the Lord for the blessings in his life.

His remains lie in state at Capilla Aurora A, Arlington East, The Garden Chapels, 1354 C. Raymundo Ave., cor. Mercedes Ave., San Miguel, Pasig City.

Interment will be on Saturday, February 10, 2007 at Evergreen Memorial Garden, Pasig City after the 2:00 p.m. Mass at Arlington East.

JESUS LOPEZ SOTELO

Nació el 6 de enero 1919
falació el 7 de febrero 2007

Rogamos por su alma.

Hermanos y hermanas, Mila, Chelito, Pilar, Rafael, William†, Pepito†, Luisito†.
Primos y primas Adela, Totó, Rubio, Carling.

Sobrinos y Sobrinas.

Funeral Mass on February 9 at 3pm in San Antonio Crypt, Makati City.

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TO ALL OF YOU,
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Beloved

GLORIA DUCLAYAN SANTOS

(March 31, 1945 - February 2, 2007)

into the bosom of God's Eternal Bliss,
thereby joining her brother **Elmer**,
parents **Pedro** and **Maria Duclayan**,
and all the faithful who have likewise Migrated
before us, have demonstrated God's love for
her, her bereaved husband **Ning Santos**,
daughter **Gloria Jr.**, and
son **Juan Paolo** are forever grateful.

Just as all of you were witnesses
of God showering her with lots of gifts
and love during all the time when our Beloved
Gloria walked among us,
your manifestation of love for her
during the Celebration of her Migration
is ample proof that she now walks
in the Eternal Garden, Fully-Drenched
with God's Love.

"Come to Me, all you who are weary and burdened, and I will give you rest."
Matthew 11:28

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RP-China trade up 17.5%

By Ronnel W. Domingo

TRADE BETWEEN THE PHILIPPINES and China went up by 17.5 percent to $7.5 billion as of November last year, according to the Department of Trade and Industry.

Trade Secretary Peter B. Favila said the increase could be traced to the Association of Southeast Asian Nations' summit with China held last month and the 31 bilateral agreements signed with Beijing officials.

"The growth in trade can be partly attributed to the implementation of the Trade in Goods Agreement between Asean and China starting January 2006 as well as to aggressive efforts of governments and of business sectors to open up more opportunities for economic partnership," Favila said.

He added that when Chinese Premier Wen Jiabao visited last month, 31 pacts were signed covering economic and technical cooperation, financing, agriculture, fisheries, energy and infrastructure development.

Both Manila and Beijing seek to boost the movement of goods, services and investments in both directions to the $30-billion mark within the next five years.

Favila had said that after a string of investment and trade promotion missions to the mainland in the past three years, Chinese capital has been committed to or is being considered for ventures in the Philippines, including government's flagship projects in transportation and power.

To consolidate the expanding areas of economic cooperation, both governments have agreed to streamline the mandate of the existing Joint Trade Committee, as provided under a memorandum of understanding on the promotion of trade investment and economic cooperation signed during Chinese President Hu Jintao's state visit in 2005.

NAG ENT ME f the
Awards ht
Awa

MANAGEMENT MEN OF THE YEAR. Jaime Augusto Zobel de Ayala (left), president and CEO of Ayala Corp., shares center stage with George S.K. Ty, Metrobank Group chair. Both were named Management Men of the Year 2006 by the Management Association of the Philippines.

Triratna ready to bid for Transco contract

By Abigail L. Ho

THE CONSORTIUM LED BY local firm Triratna Holdings Corp. is ready to bid for the 25-year National Transmission Corp. concession, as long as key "structural issues" in the final transaction documents are addressed.

In a statement issued yesterday, the group said that during last Monday's bidding for the Transco concession, its representatives asked Power Sector Assets and Liabilities Management Corp. president Nieves Osorio to defer the bidding until all issues are resolved.

"The consortium believes that its requests are highly reasonable as they are entirely consistent with customary terms for an international (merger and acquisition) transaction," it said.

Other members of the consortium are Malaysia's Tenaga Nasional Berhad (5 percent) and Newbridge Asia IV LP (35 percent).

The Triratna group, together with another pre-qualified bidder—the group of Monte Oro Grid Resources Corp. (60 percent) and China's State Grid Corp. (40 percent), represented by Walter Brown—did not submit a bid, leaving the consortium of Citadel Holdings Corp. (60 percent) and Italy's Terna SPA (40 percent) as the lone bidder for the Transco concession.

This prompted PSALM to declare the bidding a failure.

But to prove that it was serious in securing the concession to operate, maintain and expand the nationwide transmission grid despite not submitting a final bid by the Feb. 5 noon deadline, the Triratna consortium said it provided the PSALM board with copies of its $30-million bid bond, "as good faith to demonstrate its willingness to join in the bidding process provided the committee addressed the important documentation issues."

"The consortium remains very interested in participating in the privatization process," the Triratna group said.

Marina sees promise in ship repair sector

By Riza T. Olchondra

LOCAL SHIPYARDS MAY RAISE additional income from ship repair, according to an official of the Maritime Industry Authority.

"We want to enhance the sector through aggressive marketing among foreign-flagged ships that call on local ports. Instead of going to Singapore, for example, they can just have simple repairs done here," said Emerson M. Lorenzo, head of Marina's Shipping Regulation Office.

He said, however, that many local shipyards were underequipped.

He urged these shipyards to start improving their repair facilities to draw a wider range of clients, and perhaps later go into full-scale ship building.

"However, upgrading our facilities to cope with demands of international-standard ships will require heavy investment," the official said.

As for shipbuilding, Lorenzo said local shipyards, such as those in Cebu, have begun establishing ties with foreign ship builders to receive technical assistance.

The INQUIRER has reported that the Shipyard Association of Cebu (SAC) has tied up with the Netherlands' Damen Shipyards Gorinchem to make four double hull cargo tankers by 2008.

SAC president Arthur Uy, who owns Cebu-based Colorado Shipyard Corp., told the INQUIRER that the standard delivery time for double hull tankers with the optimal deadweight of 3,750 tons was 16 months.

Another demand trigger was the mandatory vessel retirement program for old ships being implemented by Marina, Lorenzo said.

Lorenzo said the average life span of each vessel was 30 to 35 years, and classed vessels could still operate well beyond 50 years.

Unclassed vessels, however, were considered old at 25 years, Lorenzo said.

He said other opportunities were in the roll-on roll-off shipbuilding and drydocking sector, which Marina also wanted to promote.

"Local shipyards have little time left to serve demand for double-hull tankers," Lorenzo said. "(But) overall, local shipyards have until 2010 to capitalize on opportunities."

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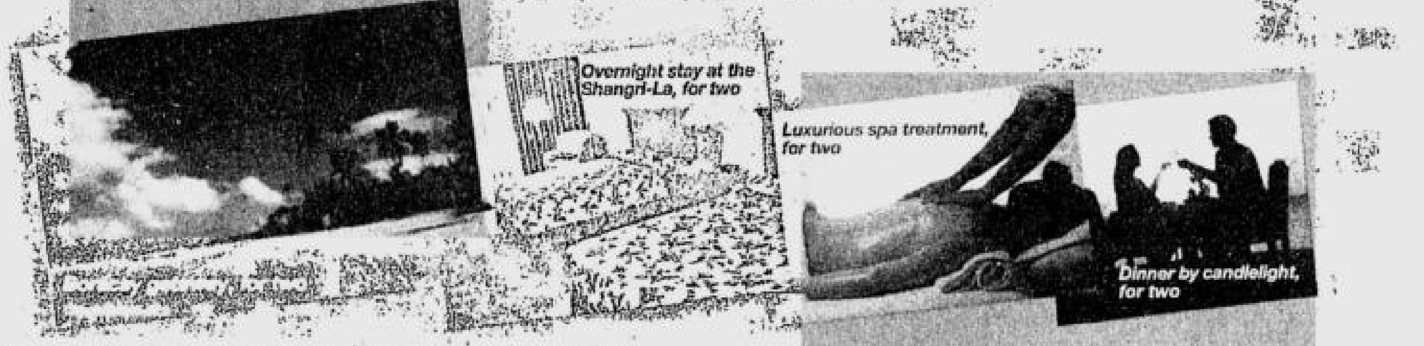
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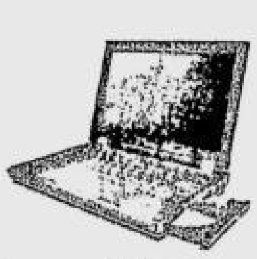

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FASHION
Love notes

Editor **Chelo Banal-Formoso**

Contributing Editors
Jenni Epperson
and Apples
Aberin-Sadhwani

Love potion No. 9

Mich Dulce's Spring/Summer 2007 collection is equal parts whimsy and wearability

Mabuhay!
I'M WITH THE DRUMMER

Jenni Epperson

SHE'S WHIMSICAL AND kitschy, unconventional and controversial. Now, Mich Dulce is making another bold statement with her Spring/Summer 2007 Collection.

Expect a Valentine fling this season from one of Manila's celebrated young designers, who has gained recognition at the Paris Young Designers' Competition and the Mega Young Designers' Competition, and was also nominated as Revolutionary Designer of the Year at the MTV Style Awards.

The Spring/Summer 2007 collection is trademark Mich, so expect equal parts whimsy and wearability—and a touch of wickedness with her signature quirks and offbeat draping.

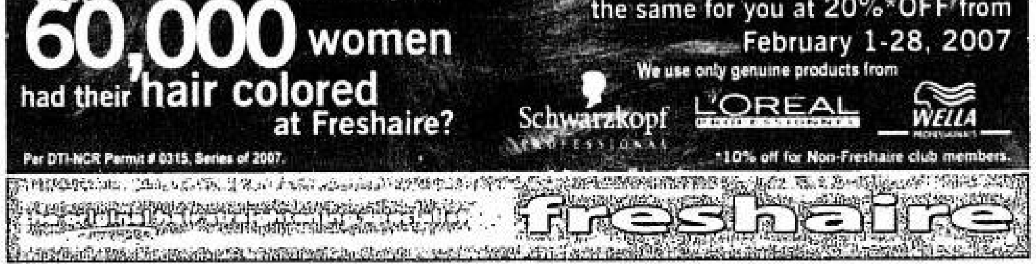
It has a touch of nostalgia, with pretty pieces, silk-screened diamonds and of course, her usual unusual sculpted cocktail dresses.

The collection could even possibly get you in the mood for romance (and mischief) this Valentine, with Mich's embroidered and screen-printed motifs. The collection merges contemporary shapes and prints with a tailored sensibility.

But what's the added exclamation point? It's her needlepoint, as she has joined forces with the French thread brand DMC.

It's a seamless fit between a designer with a penchant for

LOVE/ C2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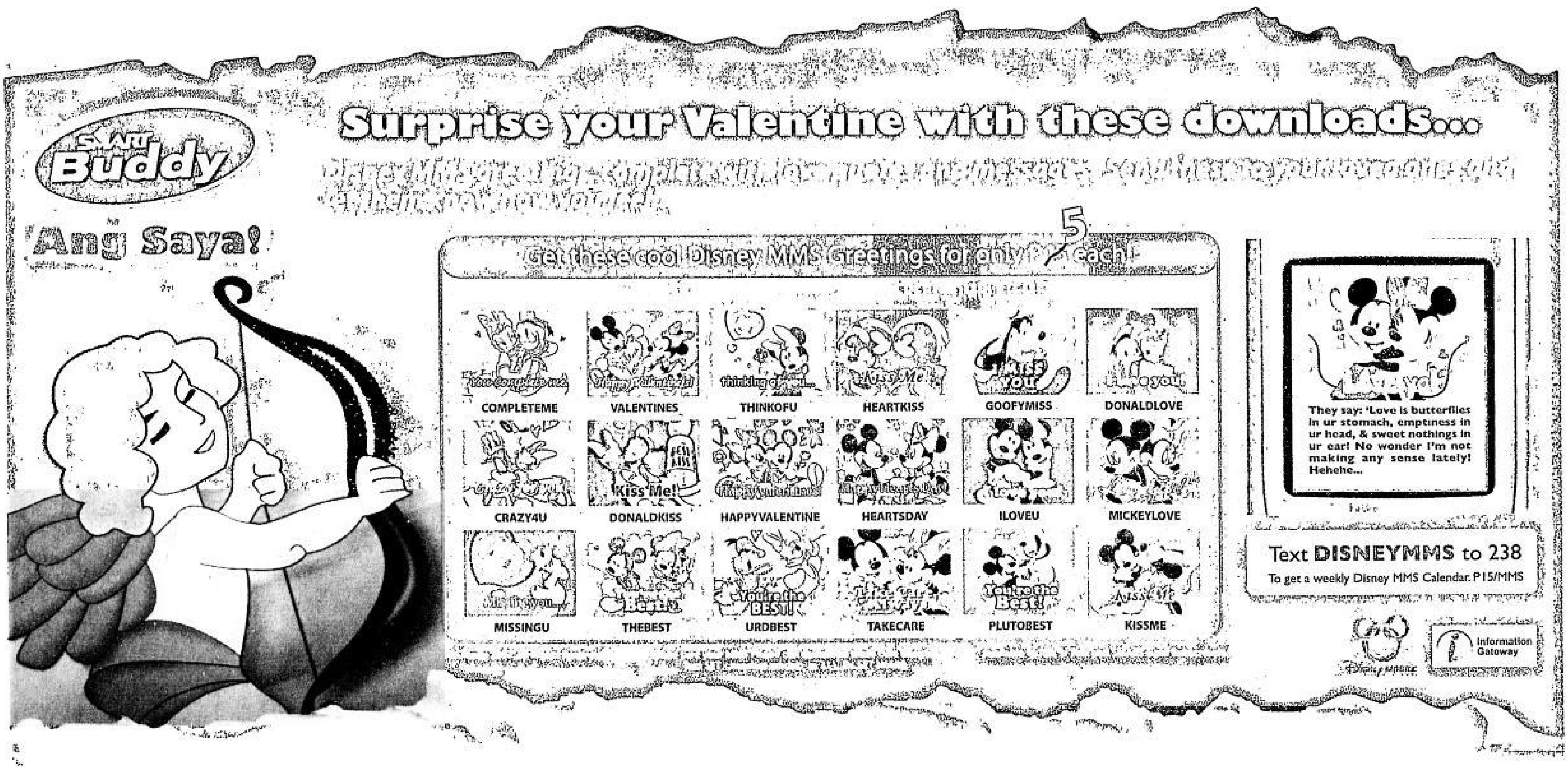

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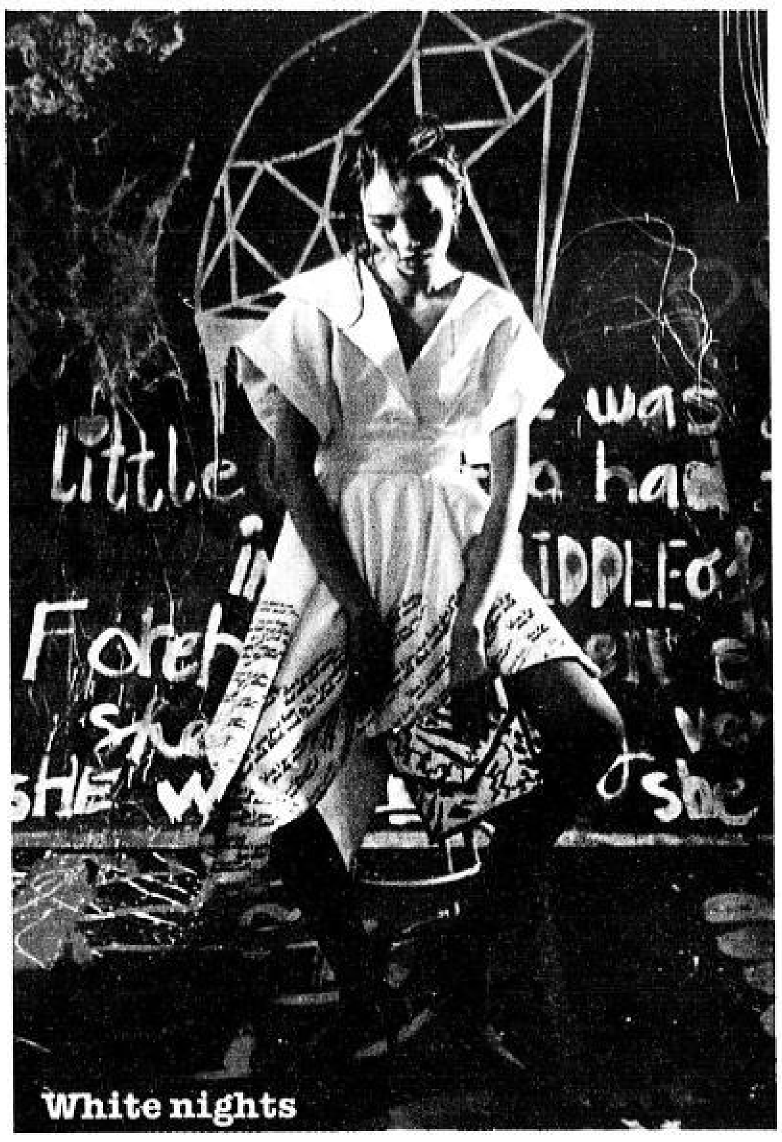

White nights

Neon brights

Noir charm

Love potion No. 9

From page C1

with a penchant for handmade, crafty kitsch and a 250-year-old company committed to building creativity through DIY fashion. An avid endorser of self-expression through stitching, DMC thought it only fitting to work with a designer who has a passion for handmade objects.

You can see this element in the limited-edition Mich Dulce for DMC accessories, which are a riot of homespun charm. Her belts, bags, sashes and hats are beautifully embroidered. Her collection defies the stereotype that cross-stitching and needlepoint are hobbies reserved solely for your *lola*.

Take it from the dynamic young designer who says: "It breaks the barriers of cross-stitch and modernizes kitsch." For once, I'm welcoming some exposed threads.

Mich Dulce's S/S 2007 collection is soon to be available at Store For All Seasons, Rustan's Makati or may be ordered through 0917-8951743. The Mich Dulce for DMC accessory line will be available at DMC stores.

E-mail the author at jfashion@inquirer.com.ph

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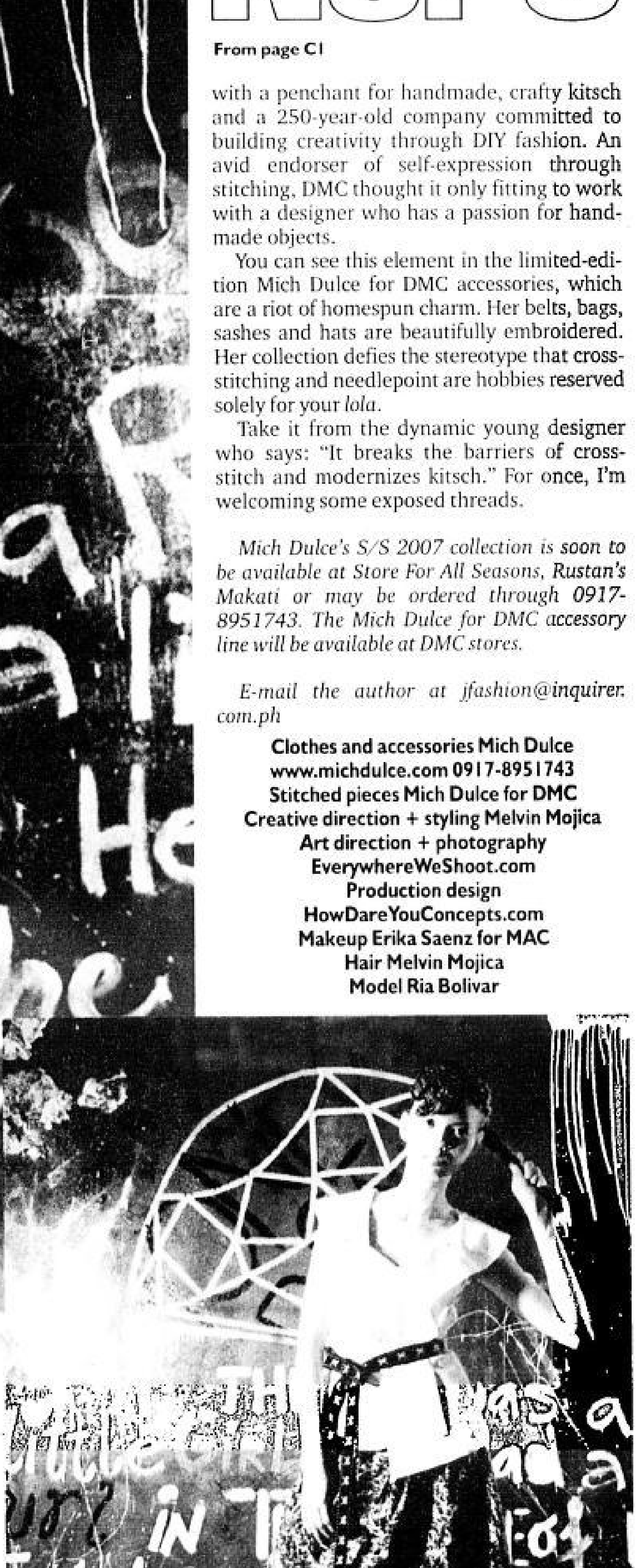

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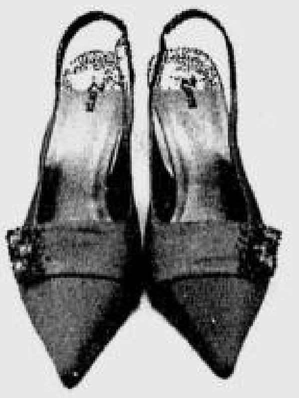
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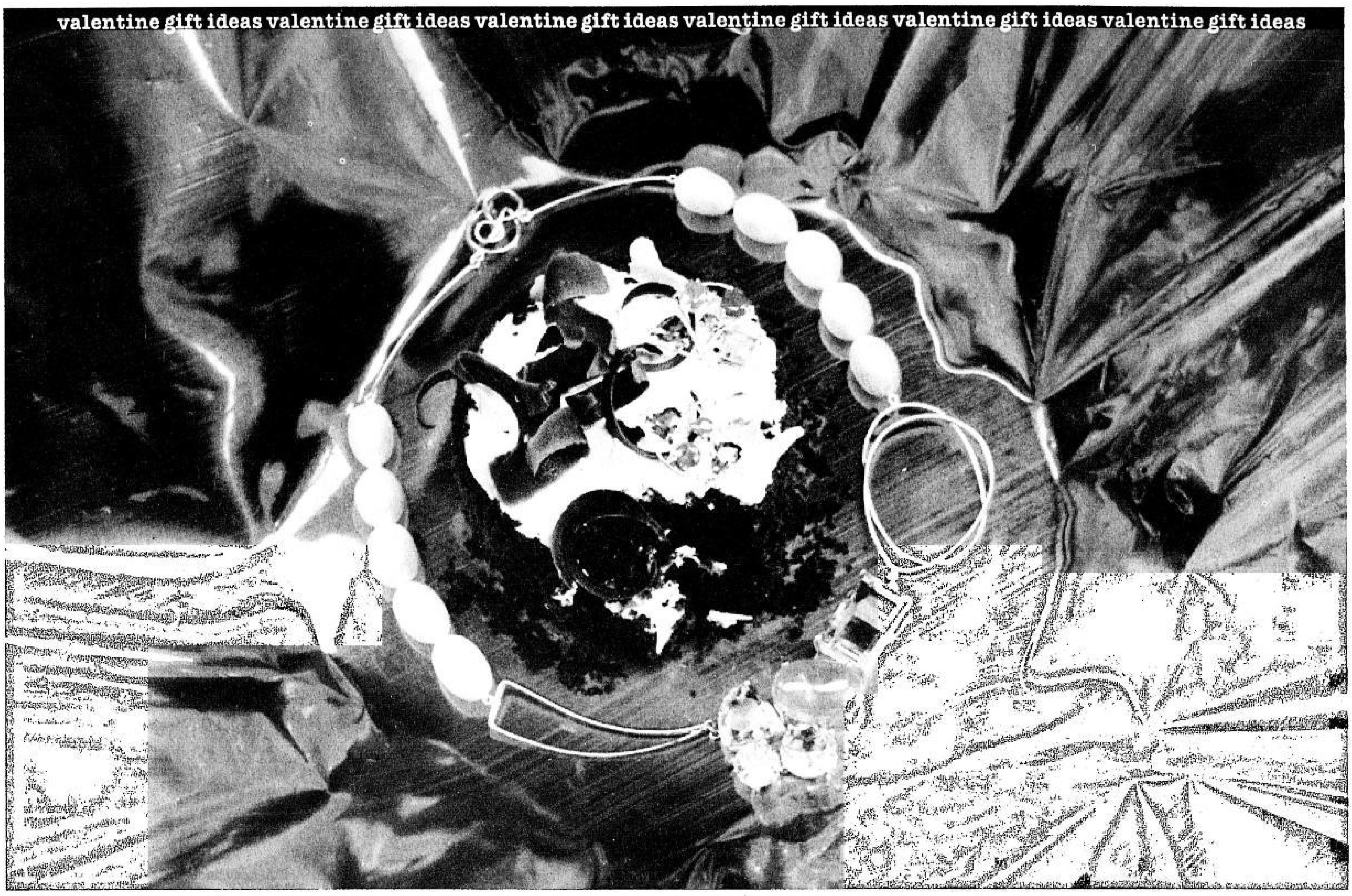


WHITE-GOLD necklace with pearls, amethyst, citrine and orange garnet, and white gold earrings with amethyst, red and orange garnet, all from Rocks by Ana Rocha. Select pieces available at Firma Greenbelt 3, and Felicity, Shangri-La Plaza Mall. Strawberry Forest cake from UCC Coffee. Rocks by Ana Rocha is on exhibit from Feb. 7-18 at the lobby of Greenbelt 3 Makati.

Just desserts

MEMO TO MEN: DIAmonds are supposedly a woman's best friend. But with the dawning of hunky Leo's eye-opening movie aptly titled "Blood Diamond," some women (not all, mind you) have lost their taste for those pricey sparklers.

In case your ladylove falls under this politically correct category, thank your lucky stars and consider INQUIRER Fashion's diamond-free Valentine's gift suggestions.

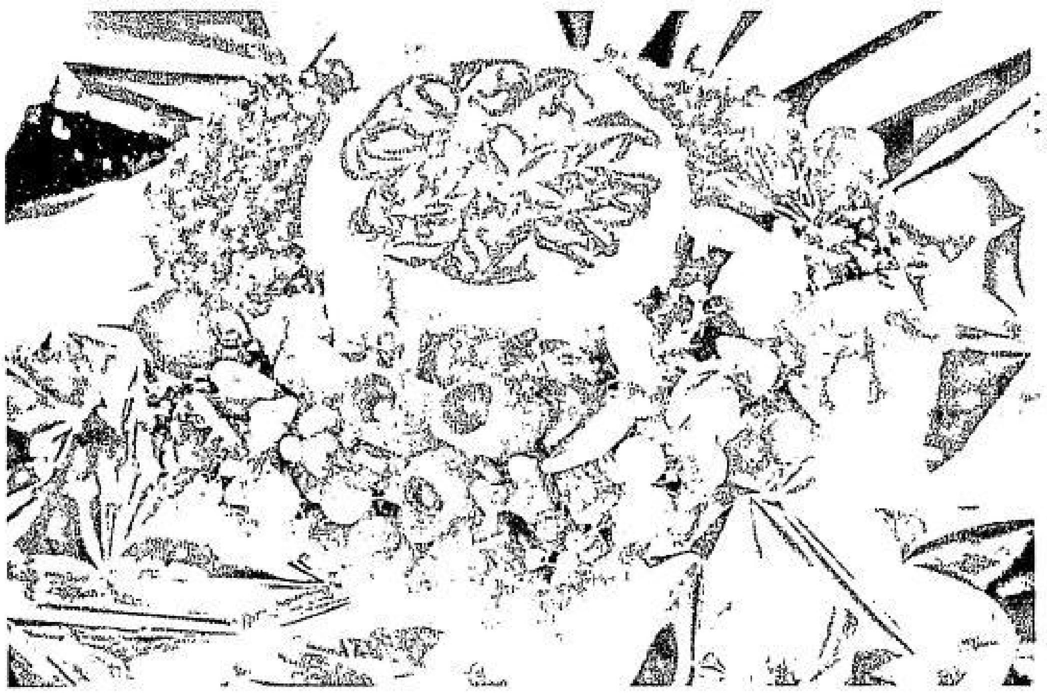
Give your woman her just desserts (in a manner of speaking, that is!) and a dose of fashion fun with these sweet little somethings—sans diamonds—from some of our most talented homegrown jewelry designers like Tweetie de Leon-Gonzalez, Ana Lloren, Ana Rocha and Rencie Santos.

These tempting confections—and we're not talking about the cakes—are mostly made of vibrant semiprecious stones that are all the rage this coming season. Go for an orange calcite neckpiece from Ice Crystals that can liven up any outfit, from the most basic white tee to a little black dress. Or choose a colorful necklace and earrings that are set in white gold from Rocks.

They're extra-special Valentine's treats that look sweet enough to eat—and perfect fashion finds that will surely impress your better half!

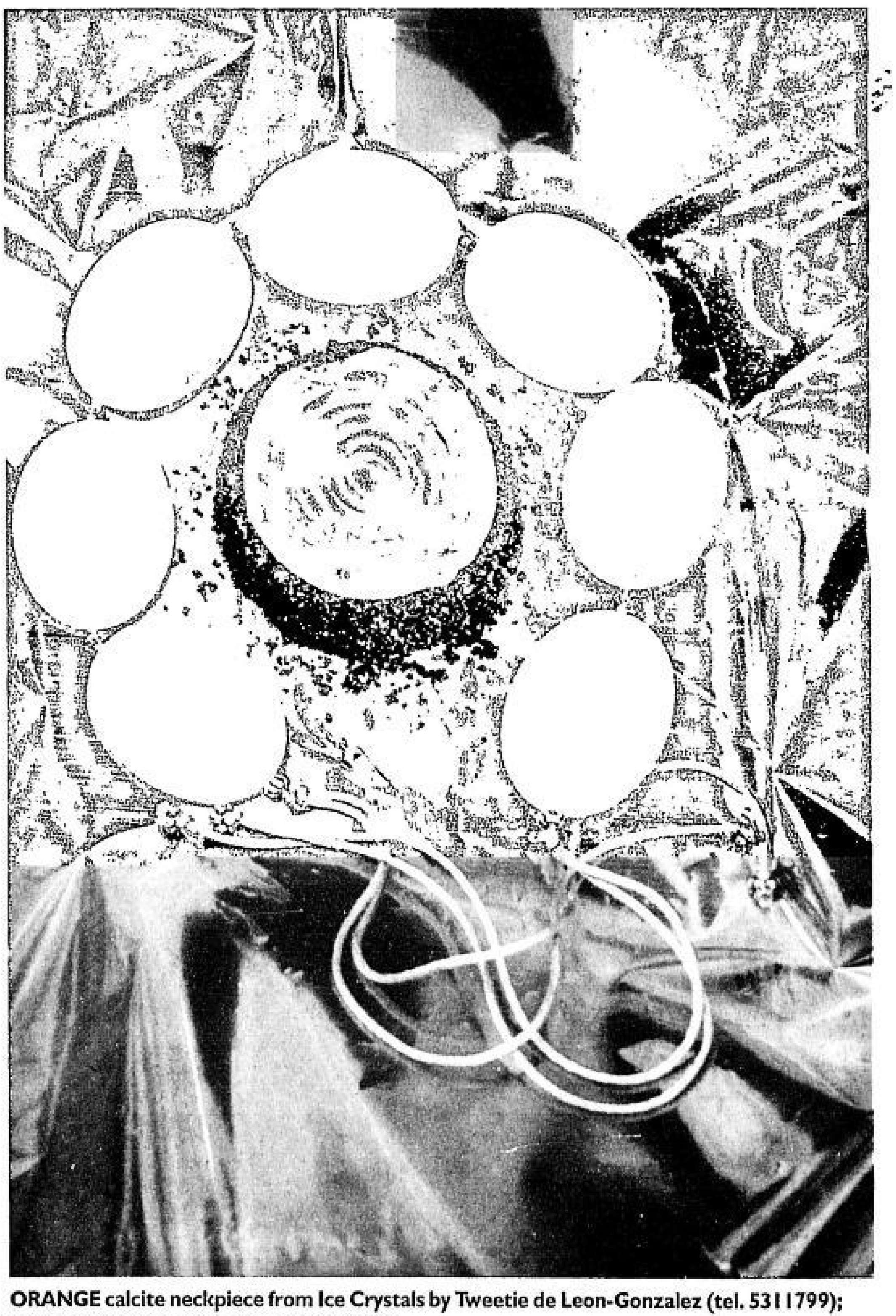
AAS

Photography Rene Mejia
Styling Millet Arzaga
Thanks to UCC Coffee for the dessert cakes featured along with the accessories



CHUNKY neckpiece with cat's eye, agate, mother-of-pearl and tube sponge accent, by Rencie Santos (0922-8871180/www.renciesantos.com); White Choco Strawberry Cheesecake from UCC Coffee

CARNELIAN and citrine bracelet from One Gem by Ana Lloren (0917-8533358)



ORANGE calcite neckpiece from Ice Crystals by Tweetie de Leon-Gonzalez (tel. 5311799); Midnight Decadent cake from UCC Coffee

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FASHION BUZZ
Hot, haute, hot news!

"PHILIPPINES' Next Top Model" host Ruffa Gutierrez

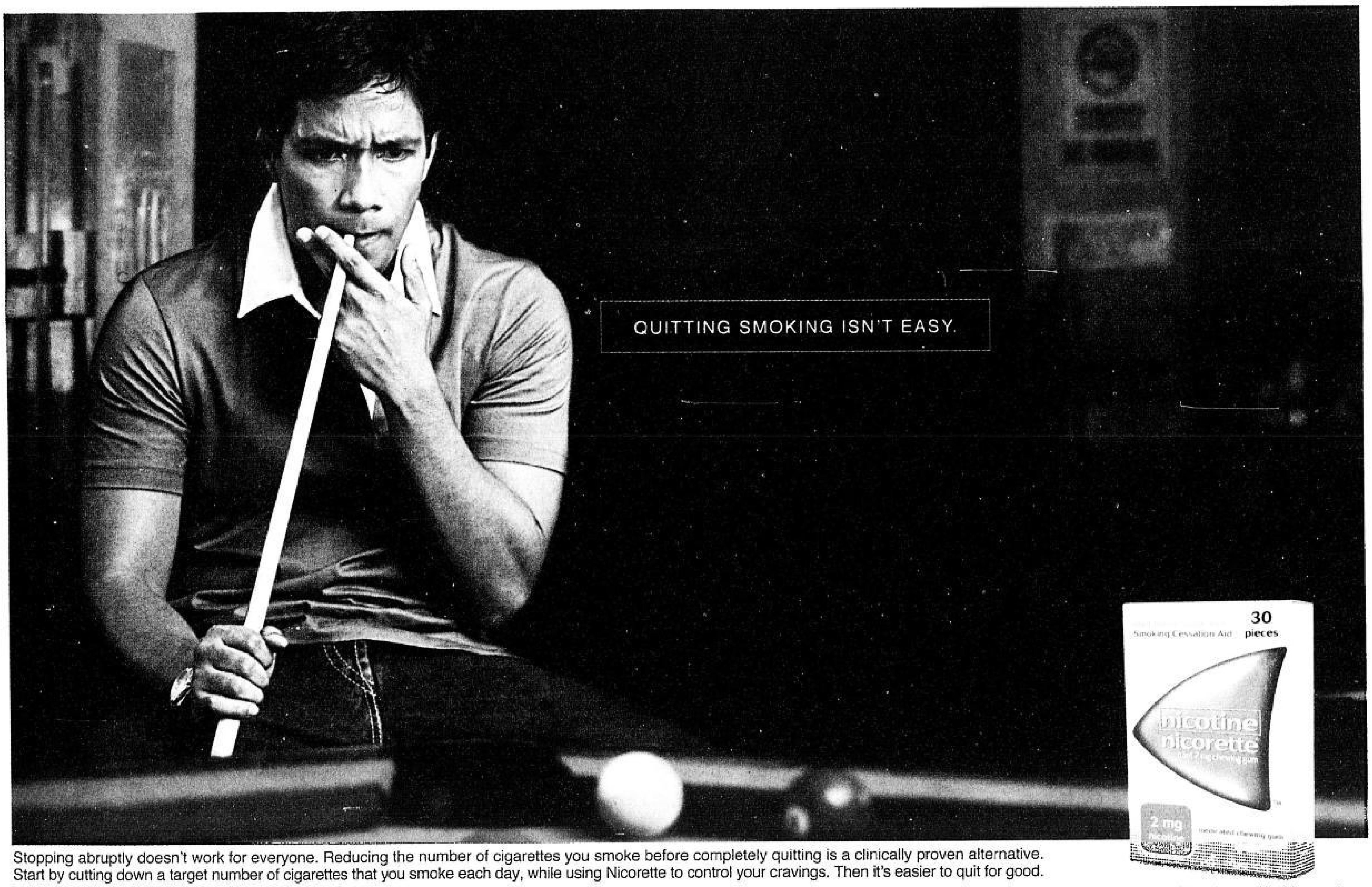
Model citizen

GUESS WHO'S IN THE RUNning for the "Philippines' Next Top Model" host? Girl, it's Ruffa Gutierrez!

Solar Entertainment Corp. prepares to set the tone of Solar-Free TV's new direction with the "Philippines' Next Top Model," an exciting new reality series based on the popular hit show, "America's Next Top Model," produced by Tyra Banks.

Seeking to promote a new brand of entertainment that breaks conventional standards of the reality genre, the "Philippines' Next Top Model" aims to search for the country's next big fashion icon.

Actress/model and former beauty queen Ruffa Gutierrez will head the search by giving guidance to ordinary young women and turning them into supermodels who will embody the confidence of the modern-day Filipina.



Stopping abruptly doesn't work for everyone. Reducing the number of cigarettes you smoke before completely quitting is a clinically proven alternative. Start by cutting down a target number of cigarettes that you smoke each day, while using Nicorette to control your cravings. Then it's easier to quit for good.

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Cut down then Stop

Have you ever tried quitting smoking and after all your attempts, find yourself smoking yet another stick of cigarette? Quitting instantly is not easy. Statistics show that up to 2/3 of people who attempted to quit smoking relapse within a few days.

Most people try to quit smoking "cold turkey" but become overwhelmed by the cravings and urge to smoke after. One of the main reasons is due to the addictive nicotine present in each cigarette stick. Quitting cold turkey is not for everyone and failed attempts to quit often leads to frustration and feeling of defeat. The good news is that there is hope for smokers out there who want to quit eventually. A solution is to CUT DOWN first, then eventually STOP. This is proven to be an effective alternative for people who want to gradually kick the habit. This method helps you be in command of your cigarette intake at a pace which puts you more in control.

Here are four steps that will help the smoker cut down, then stop.

Step 1: During the first six weeks, target the number of cigarettes to cut down per day and the date when to do so while using a Nicotine Replacement Therapy product such as the Nicorette (nicotine) gum to manage your cravings. It is recommended to have at least a 50% reduction in cigarettes per day for best results.

Step 2: Continue cutting down on your cigarettes and while using Nicorette up to six months from the first time you started cutting down on the cigarettes.

Step 3: Within 9 months, stop smoking and continue the use of Nicorette to relieve cravings.

Step 4: Use of Nicorette is gradually reduced then stopped completely. With these 4 steps, being smoke-free is made more manageable and easy.

Nicorette gum has been clinically proven safe and effective to use. The World Health Organization advocates the use of NRT products, such as the Nicorette gum, as a valuable tool in the fight against cigarette smoking, and supports its use by smokers who wish to beat the habit.

Nicorette can be purchased without prescription in all Mercury Drugstores nationwide. For more information on Nicorette, you can log on t

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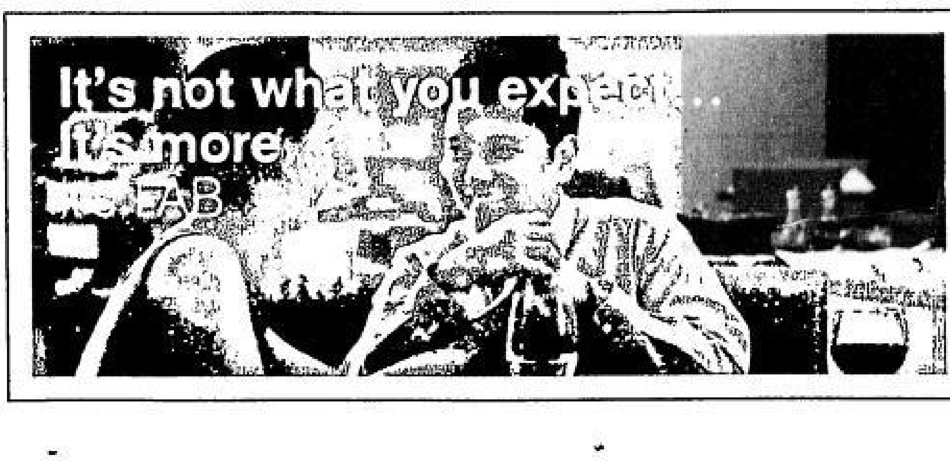
ADVT.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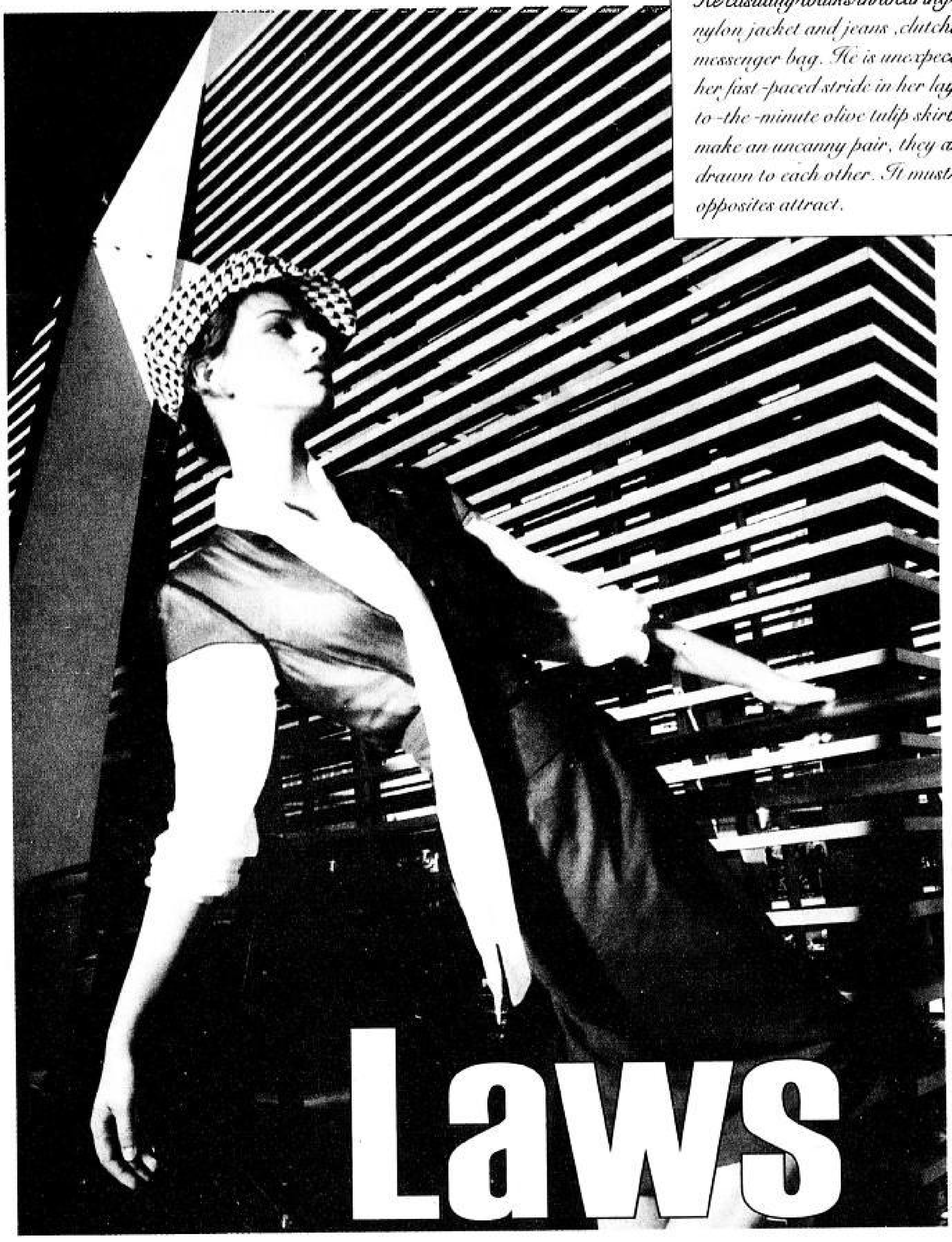


He casually walks in wearing a basic T-shirt, nylon jacket and jeans, clutching his trendy messenger bag. He is unexpectedly stirred by her fast-paced stride in her layered top and up-to-the-minute olive tulip skirt. Although they make an uncanny pair, they are undeniably drawn to each other. It must be true then: opposites attract.

ON HIM: Calvin Klein Jeans blue T-shirt, gray nylon jacket and gray slim jeans; Springfield gray messenger bag. On her: Liz Claiborne beige tie-neck blouse and maroon Victorian blouse; Laundry olive tulip skirt

Laws of attraction

APPLES' PICKINGS

Apples Aberin-Sadhwani

It's a tale as old as time. Boy meets girl, eyes lock, hearts soar and, voila, love is in the air. Feelings of romance and desire are heightened with a simple touch or a tender smile. It's a fateful encounter, a unique connection, a perfect match. Capture the heat of the season of hearts in standout style, and let your very own story of romance unfold.

E-mail the author at afashion@inquirer.com.ph

Photography Erik Liongoren
Styling Bea Constantino
Makeup Robbie Piñera
Hair Bea Misa
Models Julio and Mariana of Ahensiya Modelo
Shot on location at Greenbelt 3
and Greenbelt 4 malls

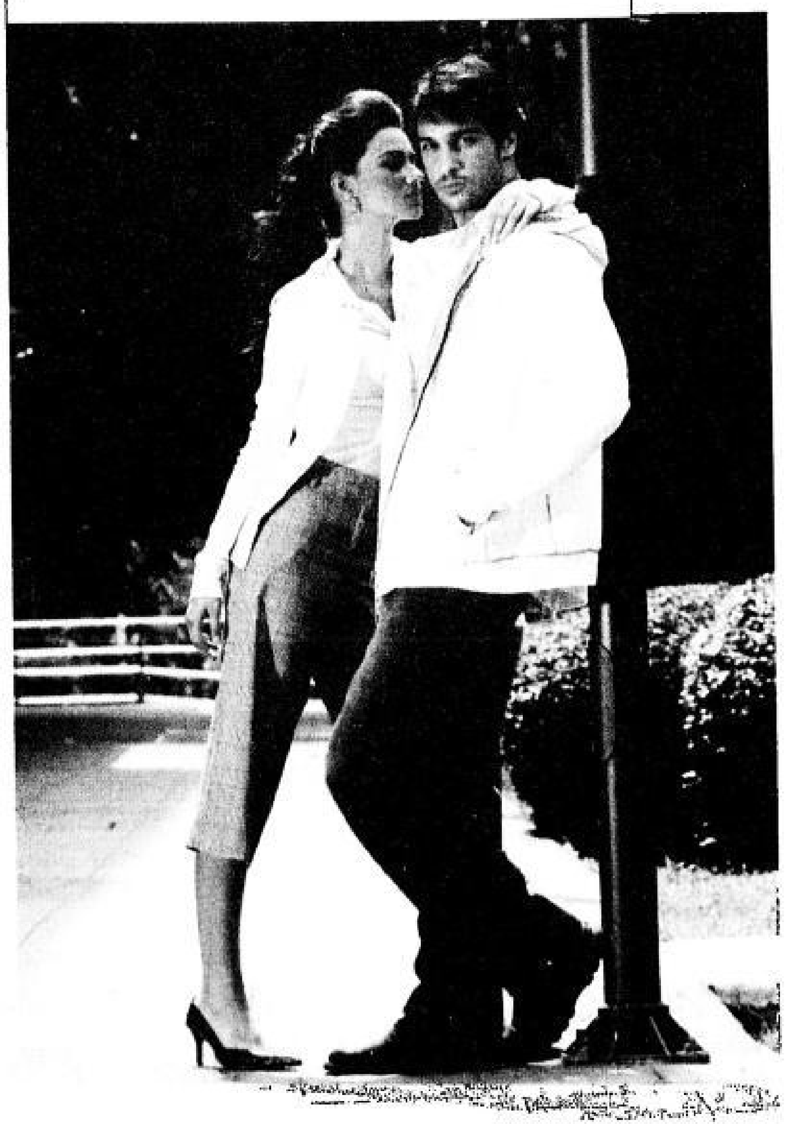
He is dressed in a comfy polo pique and faded jeans while she's in chic fashionista clothing. They're worlds apart but he sees nothing else but her.

ON HIM: Polo Jeans Co. black and gray polo, gray button-down polo shirt and faded jeans; Calvin Klein Jeans white belt. On her: Laundry crème chiffon tie-neck blouse; Mexx gray tank top; Liz Claiborne denim knee-length skirt; Episode black vest

Sitting pretty in her polka-dotted top and maroon fringed skirt, she finds comfort in the silence between them.

ON HIM: Springfield plum striped button-down polo, gray houndstooth ledger and brown bowling shoes; Polo Jeans Co. jeans. On her: Liz Claiborne black polka-dot blouse, cream lacy blouse and maroon fringed skirt

They steal a moment as he stands in his classic striped button-down shirt and jeans, content as she calls him "mine."



ON HIM: Calvin Klein Jeans blue-striped button-down shirt and jeans; Polo Jeans Co. white hoodie with fleece lining. On her: Laundry beige mush hoodie; Mexx white-striped tie-neck sleeveless blouse; Liz Claiborne gray plaid men's trousers; Charriol earrings

MARC Jacobs Fall 2007 fashion show during Mercedes-Benz Fashion Week in New York

Marc Jacobs, NY designers go separate ways

Big Apple designers follow the rhythms of the streets, but grunge-chic originator suddenly goes classical

NEW YORK—DESIGNERS showing their Fall-Winter 2007/8 collections at fashion week in New York are doing so with color, flowing lines and loose cuts, despite leading star Marc Jacobs signaling a new direction.

Fashion week so far has maintained its emphasis on the dress, which is still the showpiece, but has also shown jumpsuits, short coats and trousers, either cut close-fitted or loose and high on the waist.

But Jacobs, a major influence in US fashion and presenting perhaps the most popular runway of the week, showed a distinct change from his previous seasons, featuring silhouettes, straight dresses and long coats.

Gone are the voluminous coats and superimposed designs. Jacobs' next season sees a more mysterious wardrobe for women, with cloche hats, trouser suits and straight dresses either buttoned or finished with a belt.

Oscar de la Renta's collection used a heavy palate mostly of gray and black with color highlights and featured fur around the collars and hemlines, most of which were above the knee.

Brazilian designer Alexandre Herchcovitch meanwhile took some inspiration from the country, dressing his models in flower-print creased cloth or silk dresses worn, for example, under a green jacket.

The young designer presented some sophisticated pieces in a week usually reserved for sportswear, using exaggerated sleeves and some intriguing materials such as black plastic for his dresses.

Donna Karan again used a lot of gray and black, highlighted with yellow, shocking pink and sequins in miniskirts and dresses cut above the knee.

Carrying on from last season, there were trapeze dresses harking back to the '60s from designers such as Erin Fetherston.

Fetherston's models wore fleshy tones and pearl-gray pinafore and empire-line dresses, set off with silver Maloles ballet flats.

Her damask coats were cut short but with plenty of volume. The few pants on the catwalk were in satin, cut high and worn with sheer blouses.

AFP

OSCAR de la Renta

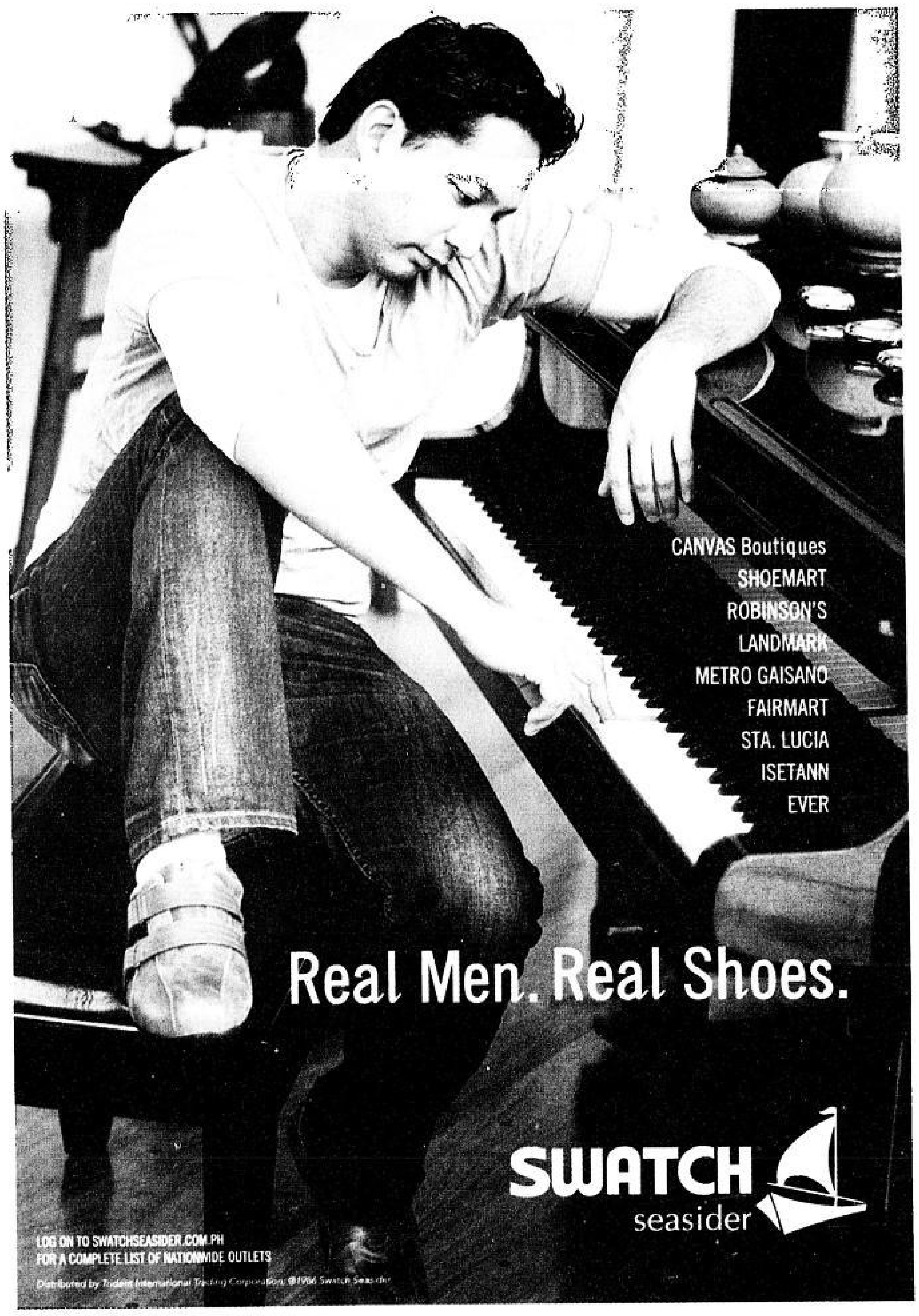
ALEXANDRE Herchcovitch

AP

OSCAR de la Renta

DONNA Karan

AP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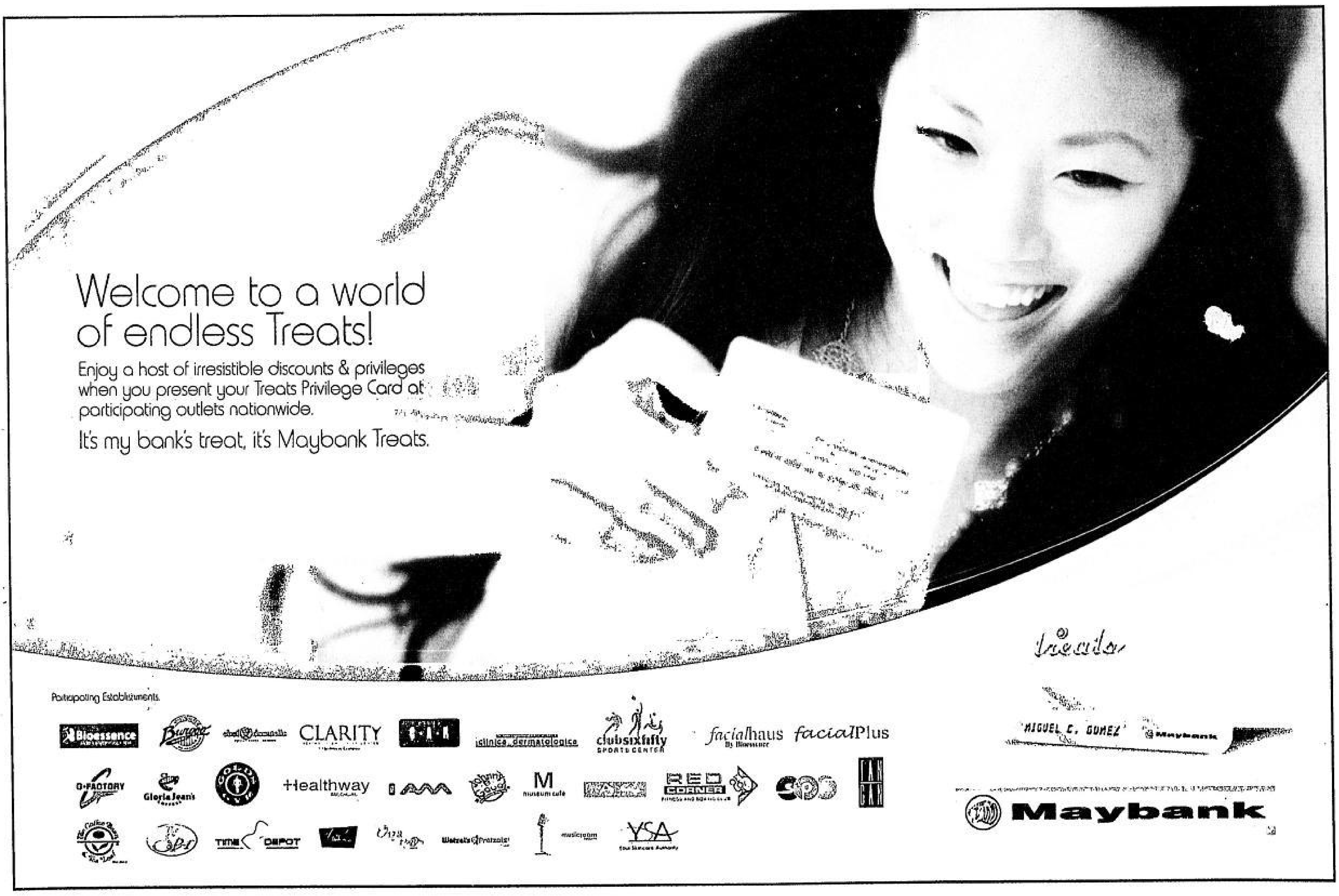
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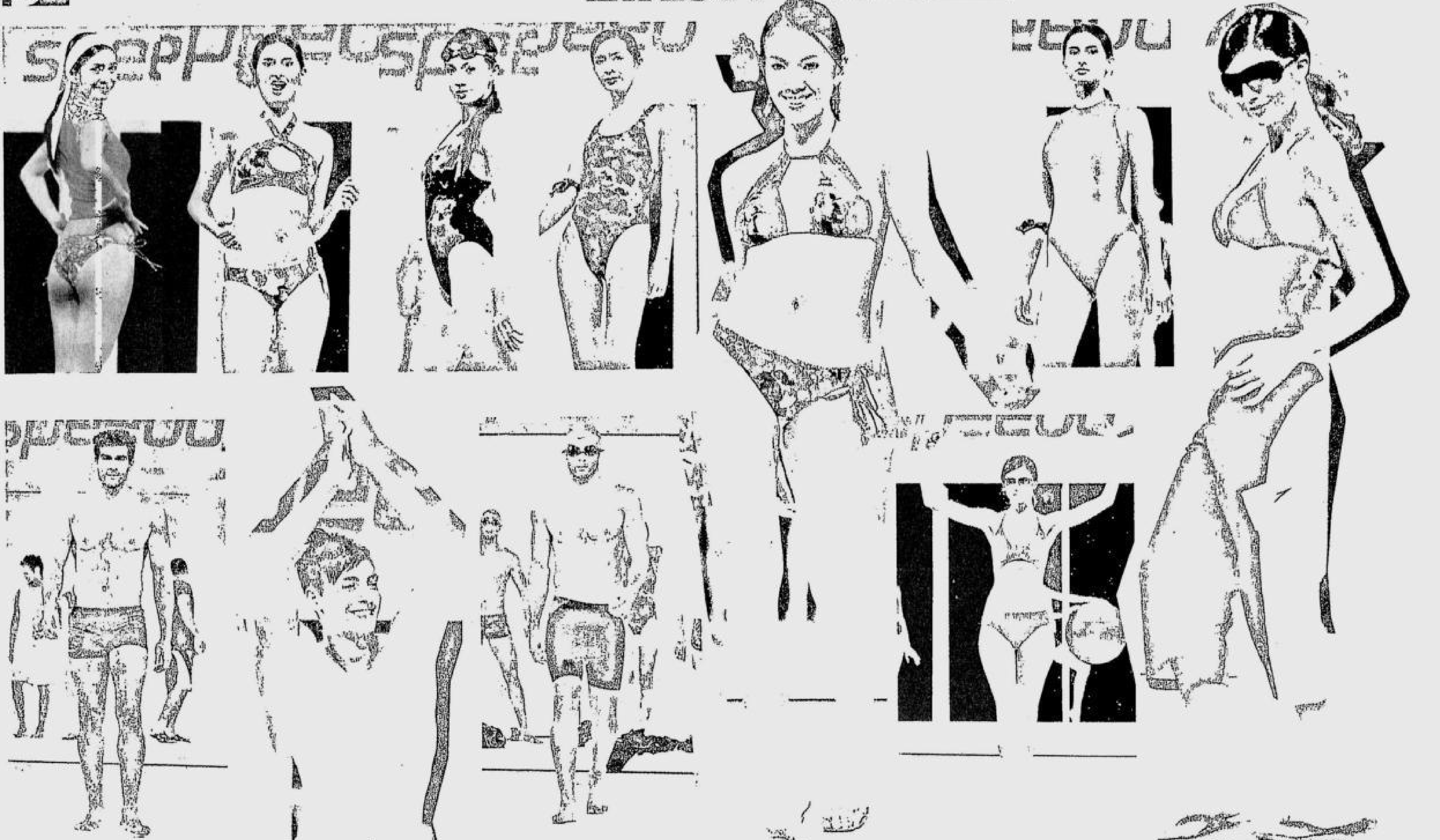

Life's a beach

Speedo collaborates with Rei Kawakubo of Comme des Garçons for the second time to create a range of swimwear, T-shirts and swim caps

Text by Cheche V. Moral
Photos by Jim Guiao Punzalan

AFTER ITS SUCCESSFUL partnerships with famous swimwear designers Melissa Odabash and Rosa Cha, Speedo has collaborated with Rei Kawakubo of Comme des Garçons for the second time to create a range of swimwear, T-shirts and swim caps to be released this spring.

The first Speedo-Comme des Garçons collection came out in Spring 2006.

But before you head out to the nearest Speedo shop, hold your horses!

"They're too expensive," an almost apologetic Michael O'Donnell said at the Speedo Spring/Summer 2007 fashion show on Thursday, when asked if the collection will be made available to the Philippine market. O'Donnell is Speedo's regional business development director.

Then, an afterthought: "Well, maybe a few select pieces will be available," he said.

The Philippines is among the Top 5 markets of the leading swimwear brand in the Asia Pacific region. Even then, "We try to be relevant to the market," explained O'Donnell's assistant, Joanna Men, such that not all the collections are brought to the islands. Meaning, only affluent markets like Japan or Hong Kong carry the entire special lines like that of Kawakubo's.

Japan remains the No. 1 market for the brand in the region, and its birthplace, Australia, a close second.

Expansive and exciting

No reason to fret, though. The brand has an expansive and exciting spring collection to pacify any unfulfilled designer longings.

In its efforts to become more and more a lifestyle brand, Speedo has also launched a range called Mind.Body.Speedo. It's inspired by yoga, with a mixture of wrap tops, tanks, track pants designed both for performance and relaxation. It features the Sculpture fabric that is said to flatter any shape as it "contours and cocoons" the body.

For the serious aquatic athletes, a capsule collection called Melbourne has been created as the Australian city hosts the 12th World Championships of Fina, the International Federation of Swimming, in mid-March. Under this line falls Speedo's performance wear, including improved versions of its sharkskin-inspired Fastskin FSII. Designs include the Melbourne camouflage, underscoring the fierceness of the competitive swimmer.

The youthful vibe of beach volleyball is interpreted into vibrant active wear named for the sport. Quick-drying graphic T-shirts, tankinis, racerback bikini tops, boyleg shorts with drawstring waists and three-quarter pants for this line combine function and style.

While the name Speedo remains synonymous to performance, the brand is continually expanding its consumer segment, each season renewing the market's interest in its fashion lines, like spring's Rio, a selection of sexier and more colorful Brazilian carnival-inspired pieces, its pulsating spirit bannered in the show finale by director Jackie Aquino.

Hit show

By all accounts, Speedo's Thursday presentation was a hit, well attended by both the business and diplomatic communities. The venue itself had everyone intrigued, however: Why would the British ambassador's residence play host to an American—or is it Australian?—brand's promotional campaign?

The curiosity apparently didn't escape the evening's host. In his welcome note, Ambassador Peter Beckingham explained that, indeed, many mistake Speedo to be an American (wrong) or an Australian brand (partly true).

Speedo was, in fact, founded by a Scottish immigrant in Bondi Beach, Australia, in 1910, though it wouldn't be known by its now-famous name until 1928. The American link is the brand's close association with such famous American athletes, including contemporary swimming champions like Michael Phelps. Speedo's headquarters are now located in Nottingham, United Kingdom, thus the British connection.

SPEEDO'S new range of wetsuits uses high-tech materials to suit both professional aquatic athletes and weekend water-sports enthusiasts. One line, called Thin Swim, is specially designed for the fashion-conscious.

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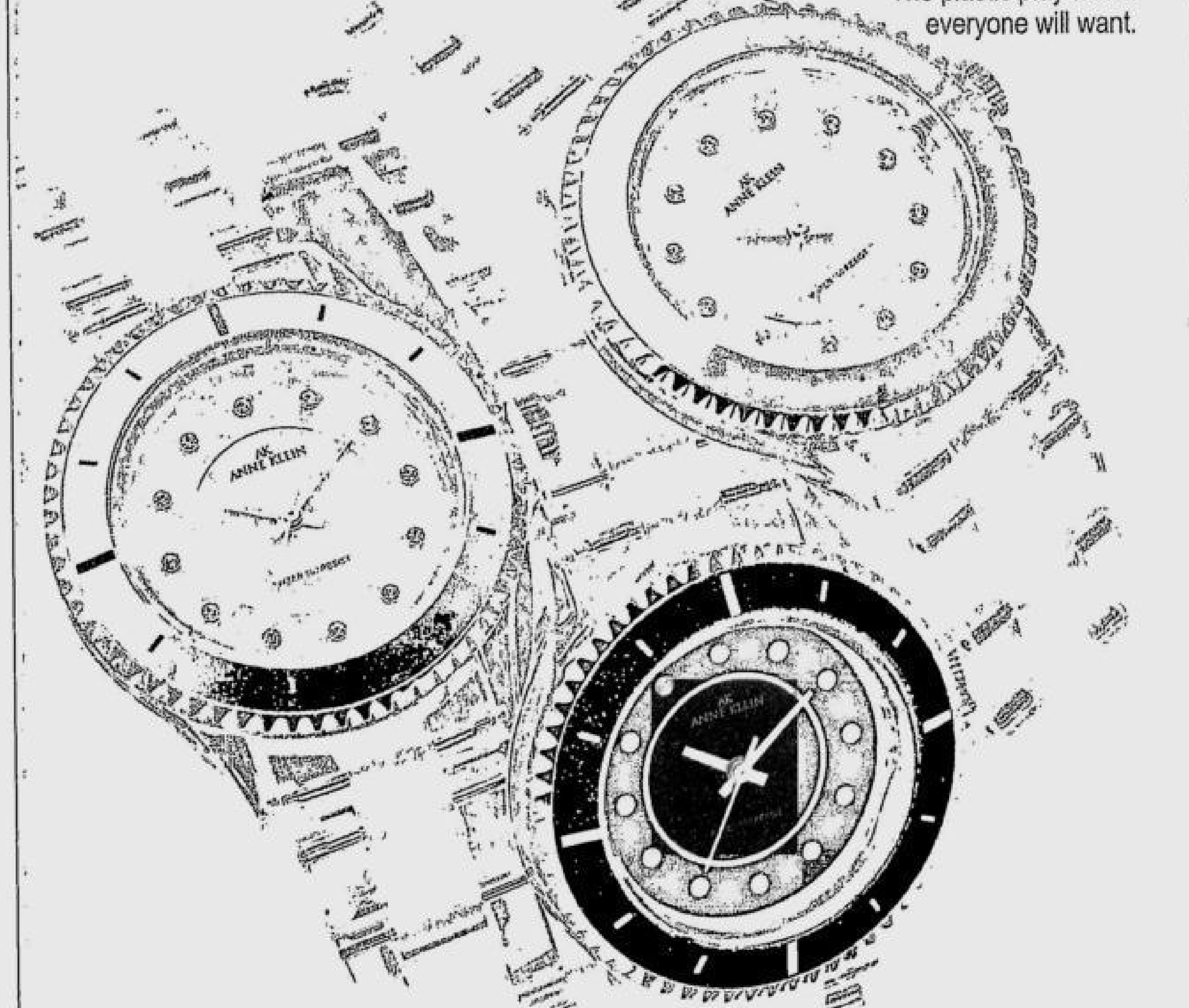

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KNOCKOUT!

Ria Francisco-Prieto

BEAUTY

Face vs accessories

Highlight your face every time; you don't want too many things cluttering your look

BIANCA Fernandez wears earrings by Carlo Evaristo (tel. 8178004, 0917-8366700)

ACCESSORIES HAVE played a major role in the fashion and beauty industries. In fact, I really can't say a hundred percent that they belong to the fashion side of the spectrum since many accessories actually draw attention to our face or any part we want to highlight, in the same way that a person who wears an anklet is hopefully confident about her legs.

More than ever, there are so many neck pieces and earrings now that are larger than what people used to wear, since we're much more open these days to semiprecious and fancy jewelry. I don't think these faux gems are something to be ashamed of. In fact, if you can't afford the real one, why not get good alternatives?

The high prices of real stones have made people more creative in using equally beautiful but more accessible ma-

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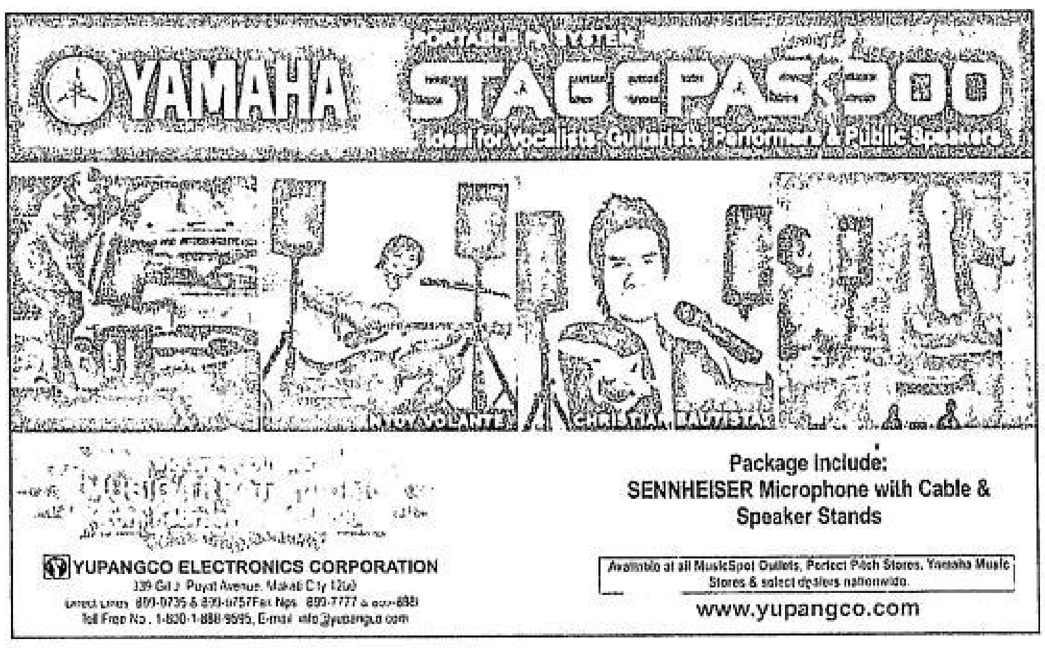

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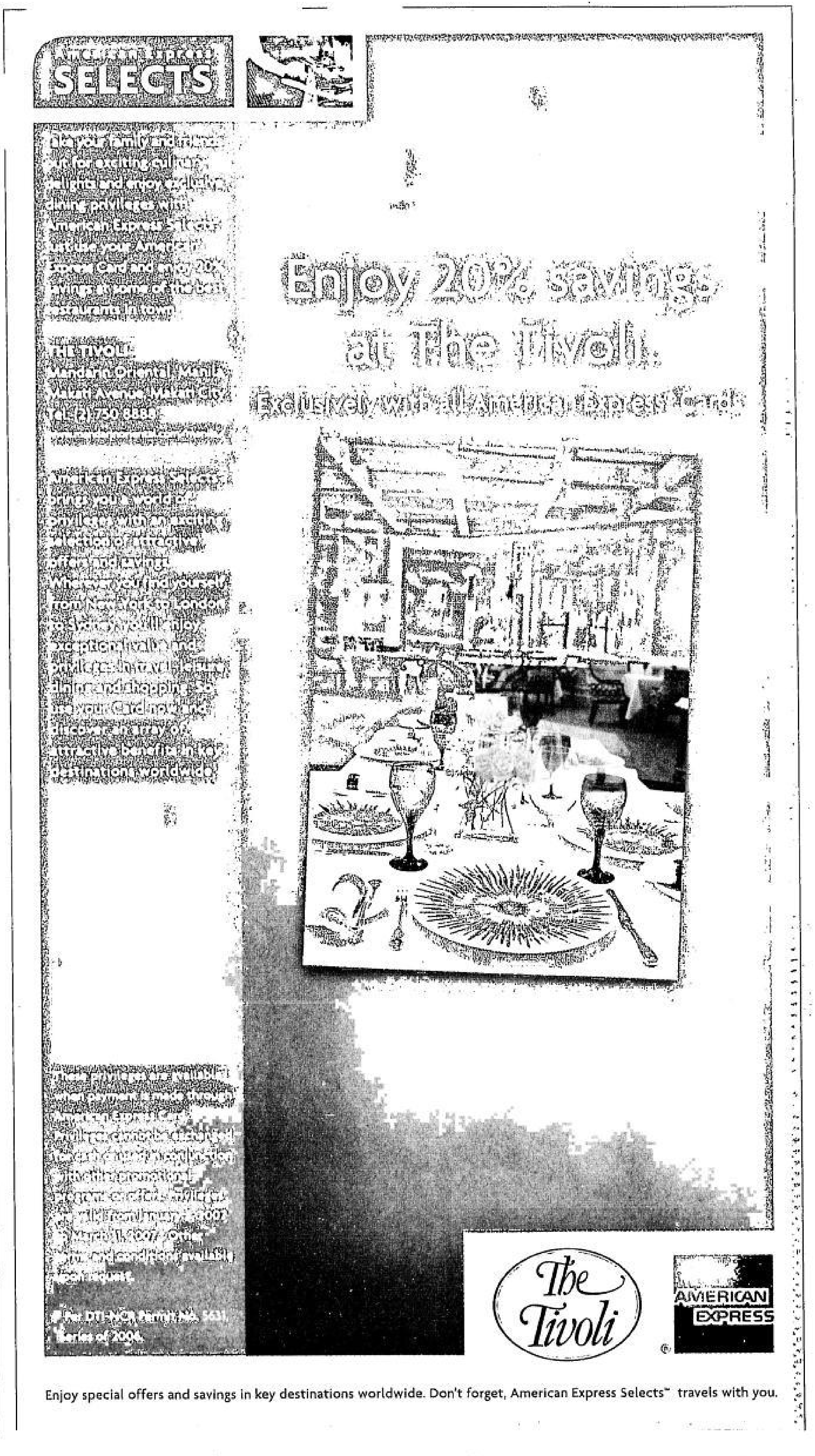

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Bob is back!

Hollywood stylist Steven Lake shares pointers on how you can pull off this cut—regardless of the shape of your face

By Cheche V. Moral

THE BOB CUT, MADE so popular in the 1960s by hair legend Vidal Sassoon, is on a major comeback this year. And while some Filipinas have caught on, sporting blunt bangs and sleek bob 'dos à la Twiggy as early as the last quarter of 2006, majority of Filipinas have yet to jump in on this trend.

Some women Lifestyle spoke to were either too content with the same hairstyle they've been wearing for the last five to 10 years that they're scared to try a new cut. Others felt their "too-round" or "too-square" face shape won't suit the bob look.

HAIR'S natural movement is the basis for Cheska Garcia's sleek bob.

Bangs

Of the latter, Hollywood stylist Steven Lake disagreed. "Everyone can sport a bob," said the 36-year-old Boston, Massachusetts, native. "Of course, you're really lucky if you have an oval face as the bob will look really good on you. But, you see, bangs can give an illusion of a longer face so it should suit a round face, too."

However, if you have angular or moon-shaped features, Lake suggested wispier bangs instead of going for a full blunt cut. Delicate layers around the face, regardless of length, can create the illusion of a slimmer mug, he added. So if you prefer to keep your shampoo-commercial-length hair, adding layers around the face will give you an instantly updated look.

"Even wavy hair can be styled into a bob," Lake noted, "but styling products would be imperative."

Do-it-yourself salon looks is the idea behind Cream Silk's campaign for its new styling line, of which Lake is the spokesperson. He collaborated with top local stylists Cherry Reyes (Essensuals Toni & Guy), Angelo Justin (Basement Salon), Ronald de la Peña (Franck Provost) and Joemar Enabacan (Salon de Manila) to form Ministry of Style, which encourages Filipinas to achieve fresh-from-salon looks with the use of the brand's styling aids: instant volume with Lite Fix, kink-free locks with Instant Straight, Smooth Defense for a sleek mane, or Extra Control for unruly tresses. Cream Silk is a Unilever brand specially formulated for Filipinas.

"We wanted something that would speak to Filipinas, and that's Hollywood," brand manager Dorothy Dee explained.

"It's a bonus that Steven's very good-looking," she added of Lake, who has worked with Renee Zellweger, Catherine Zeta-Jones and, his personal favorite, Brooke Burke.

Major break

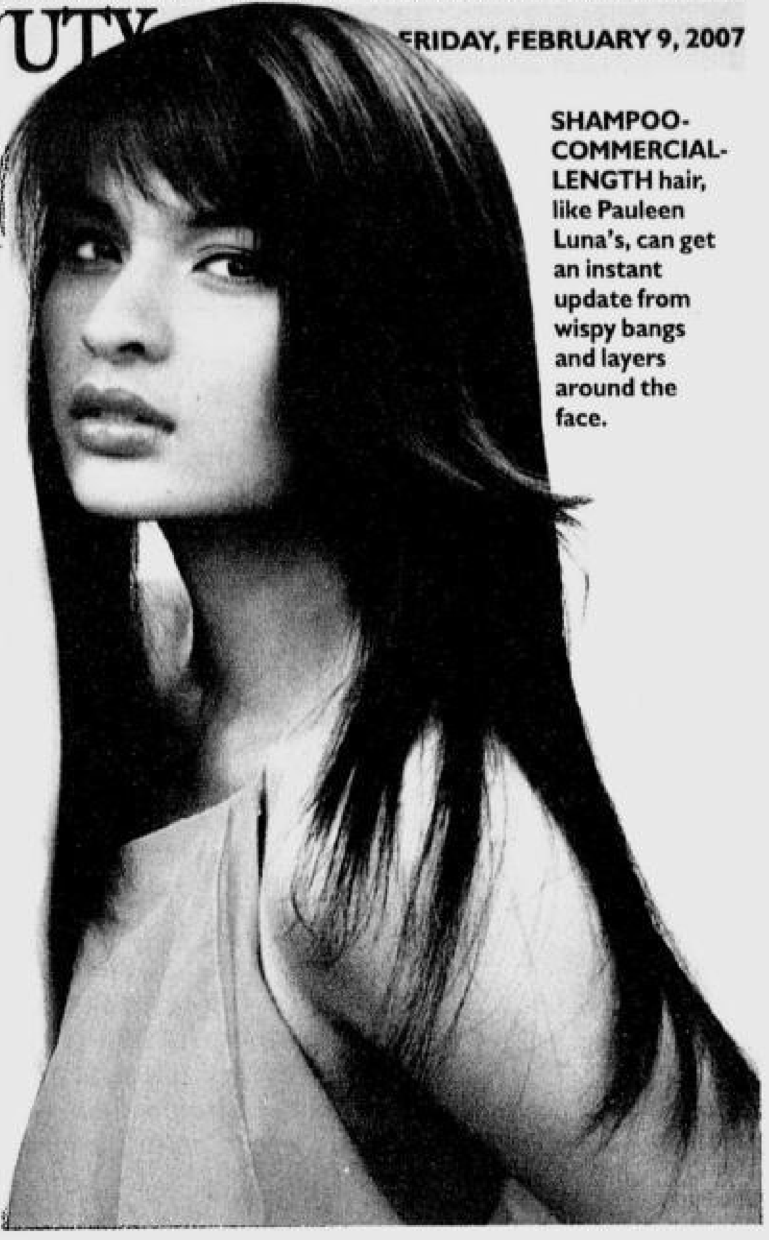
Lake has been cutting hair since he was 18. After college he moved to Los Angeles, California, where hairdressing took a backseat as he signed up for acting and modeling jobs, as well as producing fashion shows.

Lake's first major break came when a friend who owned the magazine Detour (now Flaunt), impressed by Lake's handiwork on another friend, asked him to style the glossy's cover shoot. The cover girl was actress Christina Ricci.

"There's no difference between styling a celebrity and a non-celebrity," Lake noted. "All women want the same thing, and that's to look beautiful."

"I don't think Filipinas are not adventurous when it comes to their hairstyle," he observed. "It's hard to generalize. I've seen some who are very fashion-forward. But I really like it when a client is willing to try a new look, that's the ideal client for me. Some are apprehensive when you suggest a new cut, and they don't realize how good it looks on them until they try it… I love women who can pull off short hair."

Lake proposed warm browns and caramels to give depth to Filipinas' naturally black hair. Go for highlights, he added, instead of coloring the entire head with one shade. Highlights, he explained, look better as the hair grows out. "There's none or little of that dark root showing as your hair grows. It looks subtler."


SHAMPOO-COMMERCIAL-LENGTH hair, like Pauleen Luna's, can get an instant update from wispy bangs and layers around the face.

Salon vs drugstore brands

Lake also said drugstore and supermarket brands aren't always inferior to salon brands.

"Salon products aren't always better. They have basically the same formulations as drugstore brands. The only advantage of going to the pros is in the application. A pro knows the exact color to use on your hair, and how long it takes to achieve that color. If you do it on your own you could make a mistake and end up spending more to correct it. A pro can also do highlights, you can't do it on your own."

He also advised alternating shampoos: "Use half of the bottle, then park that bottle and use another one. Go halfway, then resume with the first bottle."

The rationale? "It's like doing an exercise. If you're using the same muscles, you don't get the full benefit of your workout. The same applies to hair."

Creative Valentine gift ideas

MAKEOVER 911

Kinny Salas

THIERRY MUGLER'S Angel has remained a Top 10 bestseller in fragrances worldwide since its launch in 1993. His newest line called Angel Garden of Stars has incorporated a flower blended in the four fragrance variants with the famous Angel scent.

Each of the four flowers has a special reason for being chosen—sexy contrast. What counts of course is what goes with the woman's body chemistry, not what image she wishes to project, so try it on your skin and sniff after an hour or two before buying. One either loves it or hates it.

Lily. At first glance this flower looks very elegant, classic and pure, but when you look at it from a bird's eye view, it resembles a woman's body. Touch it and it feels like luxurious sensual velvet. The scent reminded me of honey and cinnamon on baking bread.

Violet. This tiny flower grows in the shade and looks timid and unassuming. Its fragrance though fills the whole room and lingers. The rich purple color is very regal and eye-catching. This is closest to the original Angel, but has a powdery note that makes the aroma lighter.

Peony. The most beautiful and striking of all the four flowers, it stands out like a supermodel in a room of average women. The scent though is very light and fleeting that you have to stand pretty close to smell it. My friend Dinah said it best: "Smells like a comforting rainy day."

Rose. Looks fragile, delicate and helpless, but make a grab for it and its harsh, coarse thorns will draw blood. Not a granny rose! Citrus, roses and a chocolate note makes a happy Valentine! May appeal to those who hate rose scents but may disappoint those who love the traditional English rose aroma.

Thierry Mugler fragrances are exclusively available at Rustan's Department store.

CRABTREE & Evelyn Found, P2,500

CRABTREE & Evelyn Lost-aquatic

CRABTREE & EVELYN FOUND SOLID PERFUME
CRABTREE & EVELYN FOUND
NET WT 7.0g ℮ .25 OZ
FOUND Solid perfume, P1,200

Lighter scents

Those who prefer fresher and lighter scents that last should check out Crabtree & Evelyn's new fragrances: Lost and Found at P2,500 each.

Lost comes in a blue bottle and has an aquatic and relaxing scent with notes of sea spray, peach, ginger flower and orange blossom.

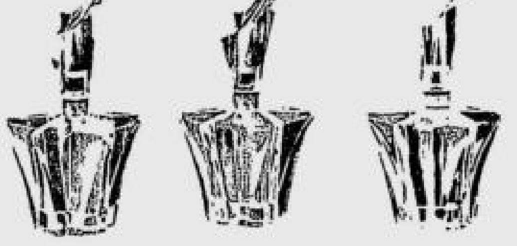
Found, in a pink bottle, has the succulent and energizing smell of pink grapefruit, caramel, sugar and cassis rose.

I particularly love the solid perfume version of each scent that has a sleek silver cylinder the size of stick foundation that fits into any bag. It gives skin a shimmer whenever applied. I went wild on the shoulders, décolletage and back with Found solid and I smelled pink grapefruit and sugar all the time. The best part is it's cheaper than bottle as it costs only P1,200.

You may try Thierry Mugler's Angel scents and spa or hair services

If you and a loved one are due for a beauty treatment or are just vain, take advantage of the promo at any of the Belo clinics that runs for the entire month of February. Come in for the same treatment and both of you will get 15 percent off.

Take note though that you should have the treatment on the same day together. It is not valid if you just accompany someone. It has to be the same treatment: both of you getting facials, laser hair removal, power peels, etc. on the same day.


LILY, Violet and Peony

The promo does not cover surgery, Perlane and Restylane, though.

If you do not have a spouse or partner, you may take along a parent, sibling, child or best friend. After all, love is not exclusive to couples! Call 8442939 to inquire if the treatment of your choice is included.

ANGEL Garden of Stars Rose

If your guy has a chubby face and it bugs him, I discovered a stylist that has a gift for giving guys the illusion of a slimmer face via a haircut. This can actually be the practical Valentine gift you can give him.

Anthony Villadolid of Philosophy salon cut a guy's hair and made him look like he lost a good 10 pounds. The cut was clean and short for business meetings or school, but also trendy enough for fun nights out or casual weekends.

He is also a licensed L'Oreal Professional Color Expert like his fellow senior stylist Jay Ballesteros. A haircut costs P500 for men and P650 for women, unlike most senior stylists that range from P800 and up.

You can have them pick a color that will flatter your skin tone naturally or bring a picture and they can match it for you. Call 8921574 or 8185401.

Face vs. accessories

From page E1

MAIKE Evers with metallic eyes

terials that actually celebrate creativity and a confident fashion sense.

One good thing to know, though, is how to make accessories such as neck pieces and earrings work with the makeup we use. To educate myself more on this, I asked Carlo Evaristo to lend me some pieces he has made, and Leo Posadas of Bed Head makeup to do a beauty shoot that we all can learn from.

If there's anything I learned from the shoot, it is balance, balance, balance.

Since Carlo's pieces were big and dramatic, Leo chose to just play up one feature and basically go for nude on the rest. For this shoot, he chose to smoke the eyes, which made everything else look glamorous and yet not overdone. He did mention that playing up your lips won't be a problem at all. All you have to do after is brush on a light shade of blush, curl your lashes and add mascara.

When it comes to hair, if you feel you are wearing a great piece of accessory and have already applied the right makeup, keep your tresses clean and sleek. You don't want too many things cluttering your look.

Truth is, beauty is all about simplicity and also fun and daring. If you don't take the time to find your best feature, you'll never know what to work on. So go ahead and discover your best asset now!

Photos Frodo
Styling Ria Francisco-Prieto
Makeup Leo Posadas
for Bed Head Cosmetics
Hair Brent Sales for Bed Head

KELLY Misa wears smoky eyes.

Teeth don't touch

The habit of clenching and night grinding (or bruxism) is bad for the teeth, muscles and jaw

ACTRESS Sarah Henrickson and her million-dollar smile AFP

By Dr. Olivia Francisco
Contributor

TEETH SHOULDN'T TOUCH when relaxed.

It's so simple. When reading, dancing, shopping, watching a movie, socializing, sleeping and, just as often as possible, remember "lips together, teeth apart."

This is important to follow because, for adults, the habit of clenching and night grinding (or bruxism) is bad for the teeth, muscles and jaw.

Once upon a time when our permanent teeth were all new, our teeth fit so poorly together that night grinding was our body's way of refining our teeth into a more suitable bite. Parents should not have to worry if their child grinds at night, even if the noise wakes the entire household. As the child matures, night grinding is usually outgrown. Any potential damage will show up in regular dental checkups.

For adults, clenching and grinding may be a way of dealing with everyday stress, anxiety, or nervousness. The problem is, you are actually chewing on your teeth! This habit will eventually cause your teeth to flatten. Over the years it can wear away tooth enamel (the protective outer layer of teeth).

Losing this enamel can lead to sensitivity, tooth decay, and even cause expensive fillings to pop out of place. I've seen teeth ground to practically half its normal height! Miraculously, some don't feel any discomfort at all. This is because our body has a way of adjusting and protecting itself in ways we do not notice. We adjust to the chronic "melting away" of our teeth so we don't actually feel the change, but in the long run this is not good at all.

Those people who grind should otherwise not be surprised as well if they have toothaches or jaw pain for no apparent reason. A patient who is clenching or grinding subjects his teeth to unnatural pressure. And since a tooth has nerve material, the nerve can get inflamed inside the tooth.

Finally, clenching and grinding is taxing on the muscles and bone as well. Hyperactivity can cause muscles around the jaw and the sides of the skull to enlarge. Overuse can also cause tenderness, spasm and pain. Oftentimes, you will feel tired in the jaw area and may experience headaches due to overworked chewing muscles. Many also develop jaw problems.

The so-called "toothbrush abrasion" along the gum line of teeth could possibly be caused by something else other than rough incorrect brushing. Ground from side to side, teeth may melt at a point where there is bending just over the gums. This is called abfraction, which can be caused by either faulty brushing or grinding.

If you know you grind your teeth or if your dentist suspects you do, what you desperately need is a night guard. It's a very conservative approach to prevent your teeth from chewing itself. The idea is for the night guard to wear out in place of your teeth, relieving yourself of tension in your slumber as the night guard is custom-made of soft material.

And if clenching is a habit, remind yourself to give your jaw a break. Let it hang. Lips together, teeth apart. Because most of the time, teeth don't touch!

The author holds clinic at The Dental Place at Corinthian Plaza building (across Greenbelt 1 and Asian Institute of Management), Paseo de Roxas, Makati. Call 8128891 or e-mail thedentalplaceco@yahoo.com.

VMV HYPOALLERGENICS

Fresh Samplers

MANILA — January 30, 2007

We make so many great products for skin that selection can be daunting. To help you navigate through our prodigious collection, we'll be offering Samples: Fresh From Our LaboratoriesTM AT VMV Skin-Specialist Boutiques for no required purchase – our samples are your reward just for stopping by.

Our aim is to give you the most skindulgent experience possible at VMV. This February, we will be giving out a complete regimen of vials for your qualified purchase. Among the most sought after regimens, **Illuminants Active 10, Multi-Level Advanced Skin Lightening and Hyperpigmentation Therapy** and the **Glykeros Micro Dermabrasion Cellular Revitalisation Anti-Senescence Therapy** will be available at the VMV Skin-Specialist Boutiques.

Visit us at any of the following Boutiques: 2F Lifestyle Section PowerPlant, Rockwell; 3F West Wing Robinson's Galleria; UG Floor Galeria de Curba Alabang Town Center. Our well-trained Beauty Consultants and Therapists will be happy to assist you.

ADVT.

Belo Awarded for Most Thermage Cases Worldwide

It is both an honor and a dream come true for the Belo Medical Group - to be recognized internationally for their medical practices. Such is the distinction being given to them by Thermage International, the renowned medical device company responsible for breakthroughs in radiofrequency technology through its patented ThermaCool device.

The award comes especially sweet for the Belo Medical Group, who is celebrating its 17th anniversary this 2007, and whose current thrust is to put Philippine Medical Tourism on the map and turn the Philippines into "the beauty capital of Asia."

Mr. Gary Wilson, Thermage International's Vice President for International Sales, flew into Manila to personally confer the award to Dr. Vicki Belo and her Belo Medical Group for having the most number of Thermage cases worldwide for 2006, besting over 2,000 physicians from countries in the US, Europe and Asia for top honors.

Approved by the US FDA in November 2002, Thermage is now available in seventy countries. In fact, it is estimated that over 275,000 procedures have been performed with the ThermaCool device, and Belo has contributed to many of those procedures within the past two years.

Certainly, being #1 in Thermage worldwide will open bigger doors for the Belo Medical Group. With the most experience, a not-too-intimidating price, excellent service and standards at par, if not better than, with the rest of the world, there is no better time to encourage non-surgical rejuvenation here in the Philippines.

**For inquiries, please call the Belo Medical Group's helpdesk at 844-2939 or e-mail us at info@belomed.com.*

ADVT.

IT DOESN'T HURT TO BE BEAUTIFUL

SMARTLIPO BY Belo Medical Group Inc.

www.belomed.com
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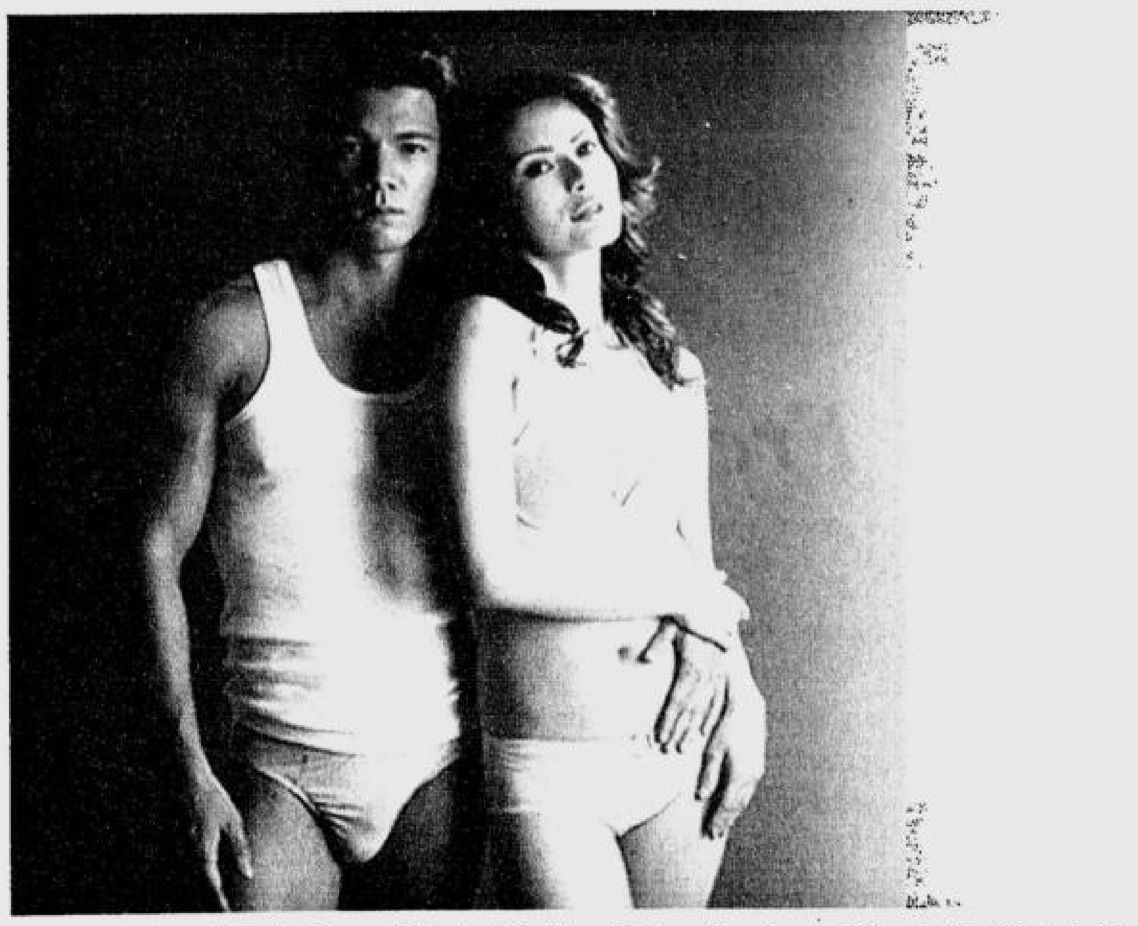
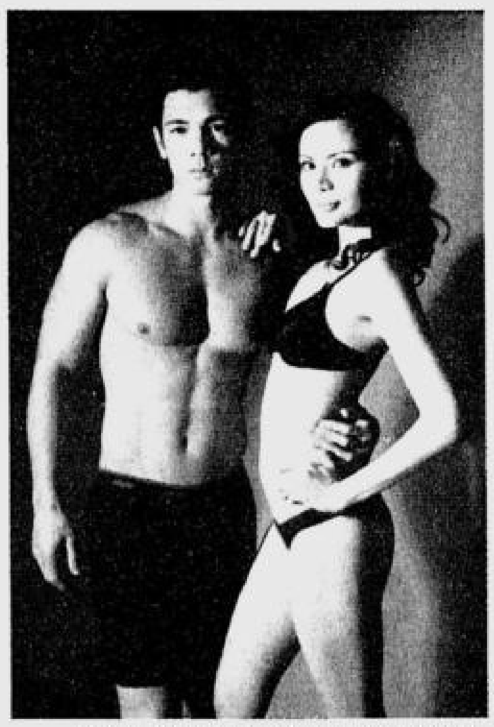


On Her: Triumph Party Bra and Panty / On Him: Walker Sando and Glow in the Dark Brief

Robinsons Department Store 'Strips Off' Prices on Select Undergarments with its UNDERWEAR FAIR

Ongoing until February 28, the "Underwear Fair" will be taking shoppers by storm and treat them to great underwear finds. From the basic boxers for him to mix-and-match panties and bras for her, everyone will surely find something to fit their lifestyle and personality. If you're in for some playful fun, there are checkered boxers and colorful T-shirt bra and panty ensembles. And if your man craves comfort, he will definitely love the basic round neck shirts and bikini briefs; while girls will surely go for the bra and panty set in nude. Robinsons Department Store features a wide array of undergarments for men and women - from hip panties and bras to classic briefs - all suited for cool pleasure. Remember, underwear has become more than just the first thing you put on and the last thing you take off; it has evolved as one of the most important things you wear all day! Choose your undergarments carefully and wear them proudly. Drop by and enjoy the price strip off of up to 50% at the "Underwear Fair" in all Robinsons Department Store branches now!

On Her: Barbizon Nude Bra and Panty with Lace and Embroidery / On Him: Jockey Comfort Stretch Round Neck Shirt and String Bikini



On Her: Barbizon Black Bra and Panty / On Him: Hanford Sport Knitted Boxer

On Her: Triumph Light Green T-Shirt Bra and Panty / On Him: Hanes Checkered Boxer

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See Mechanics Poster for Details

Week 1 Deadline of submission of entries: February 7, 2007
Draw Date: February 8, 2007
Week 2 Deadline of submission of entries: February 14, 2007
Draw Date: February 15, 2007
Week 3 Deadline of submission of entries: February 21, 2007
Draw Date: February 22, 2007
Week 4 Deadline of submission of entries: February 28, 2007
Draw Date: March 1, 2007

Robinsons Galleria
Flagship Store
Robinsons Malls
Waltermart Malls
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Tutuban Center
Metropolis Star Alabang
Festival Mall
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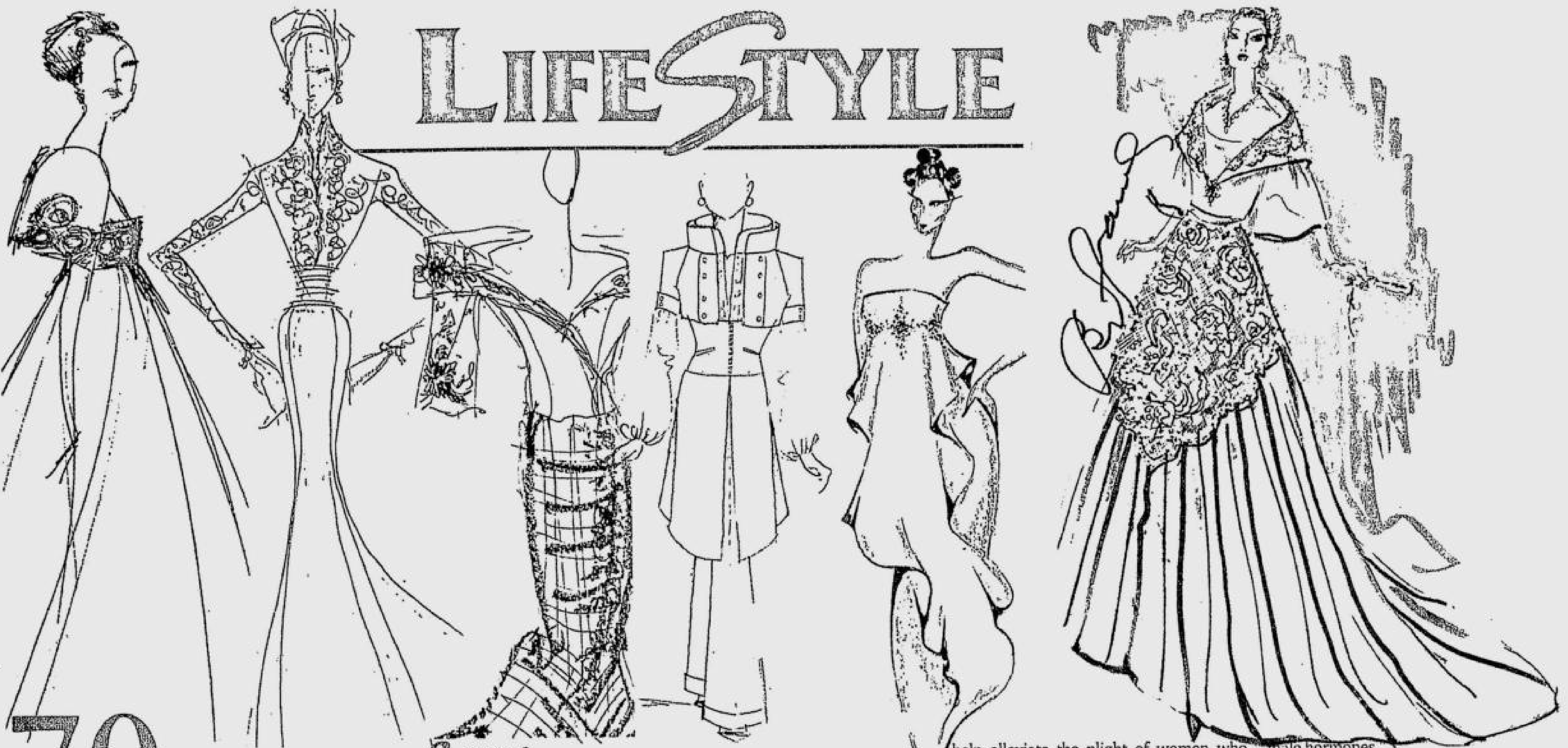
Robinsons Department Store



70 years of Pinay power

By Alex Y. Vergara

HOW FAR HAVE FILIPINO women gone since they won the right to decide their future almost 70 years ago? This should come as a timely question given that local elections are a mere three months away.

On Sept. 17, 1937, then President Manuel Quezon signed into law the country's version of the Women's Suffrage Act granting females the right to vote.

They've managed to go far, said Julie Benedicto, president of the National Federation of Women's Clubs Foundation. In fact, in some respects they've gone further than their American sisters for being instrumental in electing two women presidents in less than 20 years.

"But there's still a lot of work to be done," said Benedicto. "For one, women should be discerning enough to choose the best candidates. Their right as well as their duty doesn't end after casting their votes. They should also involve themselves in guarding them."

The foundation also goes back a long way since its forerunner, the National Federation of Women's Clubs (NFWCF), was tasked by Quezon to gather at least 300,000 signatures from women all over the country to support the suffrage law. In effect, the club has also been around for almost 70 years.

To mark the jubilee year of women suffrage, NFWCF is organizing a series of events to promote women's concerns. The series will culminate in a grand celebration at the Philippine International Convention Center sometime in September.

One such event is "Hiblang Filipina," a fashion show on Feb. 16, 7 p.m, at the Manila Hotel's Fiesta Pavilion featuring the works of 14 local designers such as Ben Farrales, Patis Tesoro, Barge Ramos, Steve de Leon, Randy Ortiz, JC Buendia, Edgar Madamba, Philip Rodriguez and Jon Herrera, to name a few.

(Interested parties may call Dr. Telly Somera at 4537619; or Cely at 5323082, NFWC office.)

Ramos, one of the country's prime exponents of indigenous fabrics, is program coordinator. He and director Ogie Atos have come up with five eras or periods as backdrops for the designers' works.

All in all, these periods (Spanish/turn of the century, American, Commonwealth, prewar/postwar, 1980s/millennium) span the length and breadth of Filipino women's struggles to be heard and take an active part in shaping the country's future.

And since self-determination is a continuous struggle, Ramos and company decided to expand the timeline further by including fashion from the new millennium.

Each designer is assigned to draw inspiration from a particular period. Tesoro, for instance, will do a Maria Clara-inspired gown in keeping with what was in vogue at the turn of the 20th century, while Ramos will come up with his version of drop-waist glamour that swept the Commonwealth period.

Since the event also aims to stir up nationalism, the designers have been encouraged to use a great deal of indigenous or locally produced fabrics such as *piña*, abaca, *jusi* and hand-woven silk, among other exquisite materials.

'Elegance and decency'

As far as Benedicto is concerned, the show also aspires to promote "elegance and decency" in the way women dress. Her foundation also wants to popularize indigenous fabrics to spur demand and help alleviate the plight of women who make them.

"The clothes will not be exact replicas of the ones available during a specific period," says Ramos. "Otherwise, they would look like costumes. We've given designers the freedom to interpret fashion the way they see it. They're also free to use imported fabrics as long as they combine them with locally produced materials."

Ramos didn't even require his colleagues to think conservatively. His only request is that they make wearable and fairly elegant clothes. He's confident enough that none of them would dare cross the line separating the daring from the vulgar.

For some strange reason, however, male designers dominate what is supposedly an event to honor the achievements of women. Not a few of the designers think that fashion knows no gender.

"It doesn't matter if you're a man or a woman," says Herrera, the youngest designer in the group. "My colleagues have been designing for women for quite a number of years and I think we know more about them than some women do. It doesn't matter as long as you know what women want."

Broadcast executive Kitchie Benedicto, Julie's daughter, even ventures with an off-the-cuff remark: "Majority of these designers may be male, but they have loads of female hormones."

It was simply a matter of convenience, says Ramos. For some reason, it's easier to get a yes from male designers than their female counterparts when it comes to group shows. Besides, he says, the local fashion biz is still lopsidedly dominated by men.

But one need not be a fashionista to enjoy the show. Atos will cap off each segment either with a song or dance number by Jed Madela, Cercado Sisters and the Cesar Reynon Dance Company.

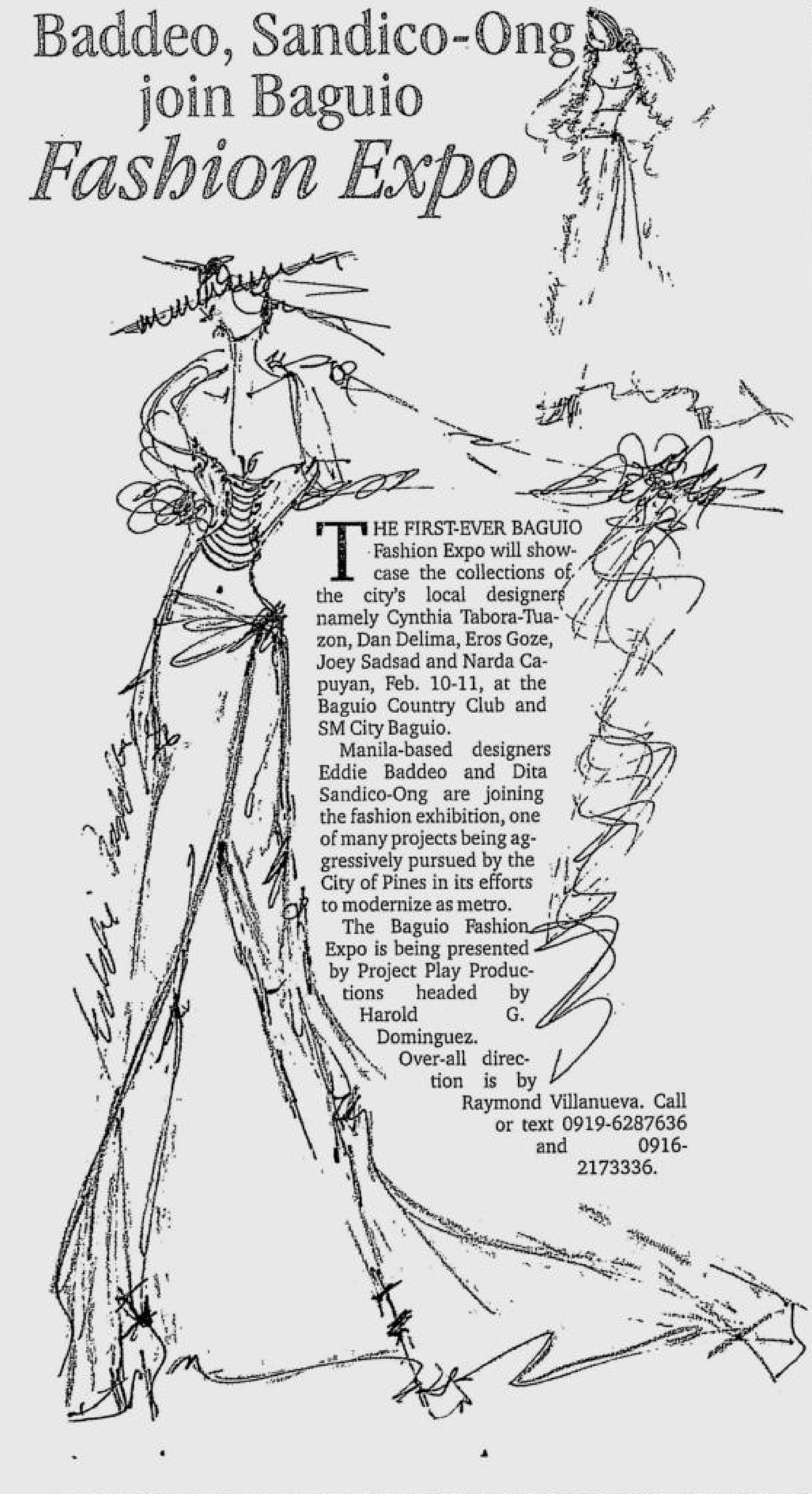
The event will culminate in the awarding of prominent women achievers, such as former Sen. Helena Benitez, La Union Mayor Mary Jane Ortega, former Quezon City Mayor Adelina Rodriguez, Rep. Cynthia Villar, media executive Wilma Galvante, Red Cross chair Rosa Rosal, Soraya Jaffar and Margot Osmeña, among others.

Outgoing Lipa Mayor Vilma Santos, Gina Lopez and Charo Santos-Concio have also been cited as achievers. Unfortunately, their tight schedules won't allow them to personally receive their awards.

To make "Hiblang Filipina" truly a celebration of women's fashion, each of the women achiever will be dressed up by a particular designer. Although not necessarily dominated by women, fashion will always be primarily for women.

E-mail the author at avergara@inquirer.com.ph

Baddeo, Sandico-Ong join Baguio *Fashion Expo*

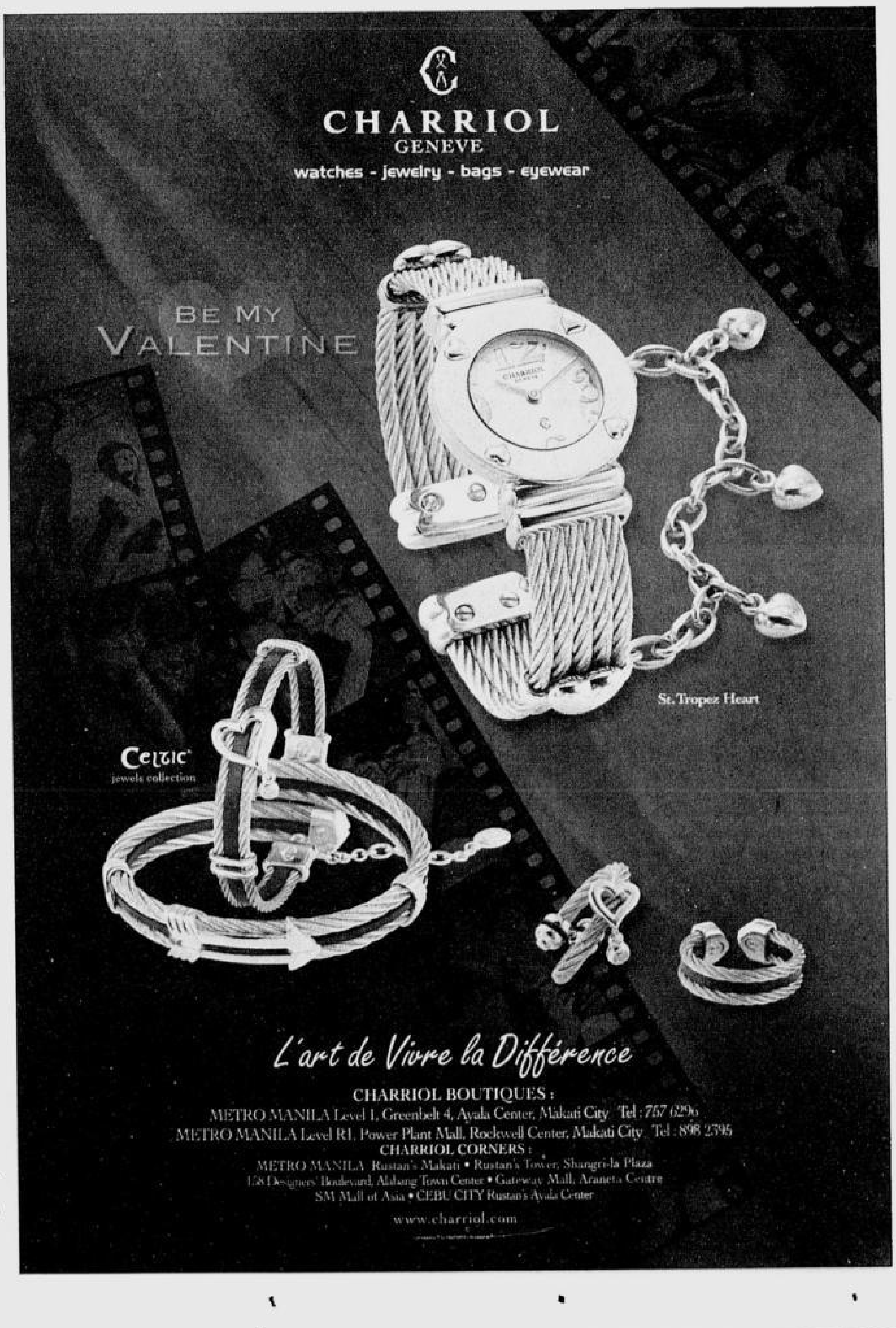


THE FIRST-EVER BAGUIO Fashion Expo will showcase the collections of the city's local designers namely Cynthia Tabora-Tuazon, Dan Delima, Eros Goze, Joey Sadsad and Narda Capuyan, Feb. 10-11, at the Baguio Country Club and SM City Baguio.

Manila-based designers Eddie Baddeo and Dita Sandico-Ong are joining the fashion exhibition, one of many projects being aggressively pursued by the City of Pines in its efforts to modernize as metro.

The Baguio Fashion Expo is being presented by Project Play Productions headed by Harold G. Dominguez.

Over-all direction is by Raymond Villanueva. Call or text 0919-6287636 and 0916-2173336.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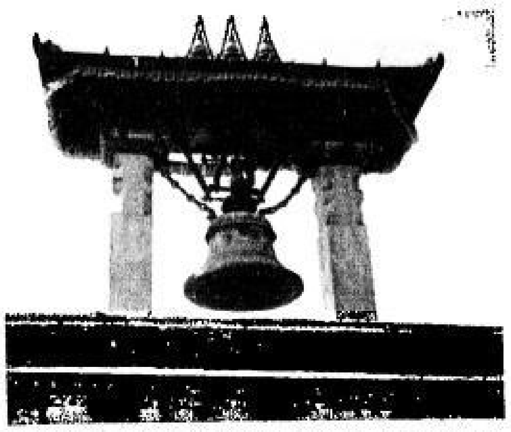
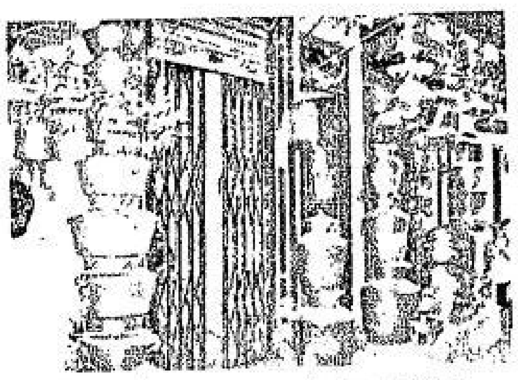
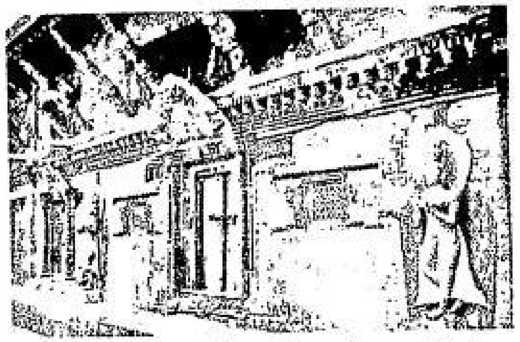
WOMEN selling eye-catching beads wear their colorful national dress at the Palace where the kings of Nepal are crowned.

OUR GROUP being welcomed at Dwarika's Hotel. Pepper Teehankee, PAL's brilliant Desi Martin, Tara Sering, Liza Ilarde Cuenca and *moi*


BRONZE bell at the stone temple of Batsala Devi

FLOWER offerings for the soon-to-be-cremated remains of a loved one


BRASS and copper ware at a flea market


GOLDEN door of one of the palaces at Patan Durbar Square

GIGANTIC prayer wheel

Discovering my own Shangri-La

ARJUN Sharma, Shiva Travels managing director, who arranged our stay in Nepal

WITHOUT BATTING AN EYELASH

Maurice Arcache

Photos by Alex Van Hagen using **Kodak** EasyShare system

THIS WAS MY FIRST EXCITING trip to my dreamland, Nepal, and it had to be our pal, Philippine Airlines, to make that dream come true. PAL was launching its fantastic Swingaround flights all over Asia, with some partner airlines.

In our super interesting Swingaround Kathmandu Package, we took the Royal Nepal Airlines from Hong Kong, but not after staying over for a day in the shopping city.

First stop was for an excellent lunch at the grandioso Hong Kong Peninsula, dahlings, where we were treated to one of the best dim sum among the other yummies that the hotel offered. Then director of PR **Lamey Chang** took us on a brief tour of the gorgeously renovated rooms of the Pen. Afterward, we shopped till most of the shops closed and we hit our bed at 12 midnight.

Bright and early in the morning, we were off to the airport to catch our flight to Kathmandu with Nepal Airlines.

After a short four-hour trip, there they were, the great Himalayan mountains, bright and clear with their snowy peaks. As we got closer to landing, the pilot announced: "To your right is Mount Everest."

Needless to say, our faces were glued to the windows of the plane till we landed.

Once our group was out of immigration, *moi* had to pinch myself. "Wow! I'm actually here, in my dreamland," I thought aloud, with our group echoing the same opinion, dahlings.

Exotic

Welcome to the spectacular Kathmandu of Nepal. It is the most happening exotic travel destination; the country with a difference; where the rhythm of life is elegantly slow and the way of life is traditional and unsophisticated.

This capital of the kingdom is definitely a gorgeous treasure house of ancient art; ancient temples, seven of which are listed in the Unesco World Heritage Monuments List; and palaces, shrines, squares, courtyards—a fairytale land of kings and royals!

Our first stop was the awesome Dwarika's Hotel, Kathmandu, (although it is not included in the Swingaround packages,) a hotel one must visit or, better yet, stay in.

Its elegance, impeccable service was an architectural feat in itself, dahlings. Blended into the rooms, windows, walls, door frames and other fixtures are hundreds of years-old exquisite carvings, painstakingly restored by superbly trained wood carvers.

Once settled in our rooms we were off to our first interesting sight, the Patan Durbar Square.

Situated at the heart of the ancient city of Patan, this enormous square is full of ancient palaces, temples and shrines. It is renowned for its exquisite wood and stone carvings, all found in the three main *chowks* or courtyards.

But the mind-boggling sight is the Sundari Chowk, which holds in the center a masterpiece of stone architecture, the Royal Bath, called Tushahity.

Another fantastic sight is Krishna Mandir Temple, built in 1637. It is the only temple of Lord Krishna, having 21 spires completely made of stone.

We then drove over to the picturesque lush gardens of Patan Museum and dined at the quaint outdoor café in Patan Durbar.

Our group, with the help of our guide, dug into the yummy variety of Nepalese dishes, and cleaned out every order we had. It was that good and showed how famished we were.

Great temples

Next, we were off to visit another World Heritage monument, the Pashupatinath Temple, situated 5 km out of Kathmandu. This is the temple of Lord Shiva that has a two-tiered golden roof and silver doors, considered one of the holiest shrines for Hindus.

Only Hindus are allowed inside the temple, but we could clearly see all the activities taking place, like the cremation scene by the Bagmati River. It was a fascinating and yet sad sight—the Nepalese cremating their dearly departed and later spilling the ashes and bones to the river.

Early the next morning, at 5:30 a.m., we got up and rushed through the delicious breakfast at the hotel and went straight to the airport which was bustling with mountain trekkers taking flights to different areas of the Himalaya mountains.

But the flight one must definitely take while in Kathmandu is the popular early-morning mountain flight to see and drool over Mount Everest. We took that flight in our comfy modern Yeti Airlines aircraft that holds 30 passengers through a short 45-minute round-trip.

We flew over the awesome Himalaya range where you get a dramatic view of the world's highest peaks while closing in on the majestic Mt. Everest. Wow!

We were left breathless by the awesome sight of this mountain. The rush of adrenalin is unexplainable as we cruised at camera range of 25,000 ft, thinking how the climbers who made it to the top must feel and say: "Yes, there is a God."

We drove 8 km east of Kathmandu to the Buddhanath Stupa to be at the center of Tibetan culture in Nepal. This 36-meter-high ancient colossal Stupa is one of the biggest in the world and the center of Tibetan Buddhism.

We watched with fascination as Tibetans in colorful attire made their worship here. They made several rounds of the temple while praying their beads.

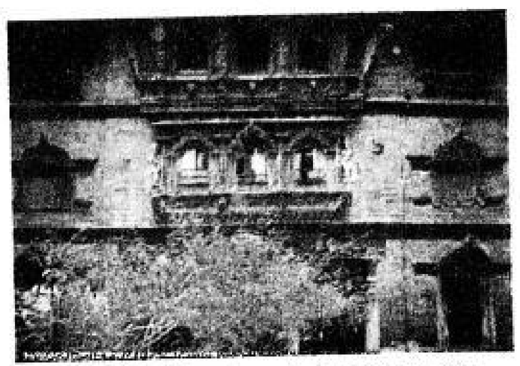
But the shops close by were too tempting to pass off and not buy in.

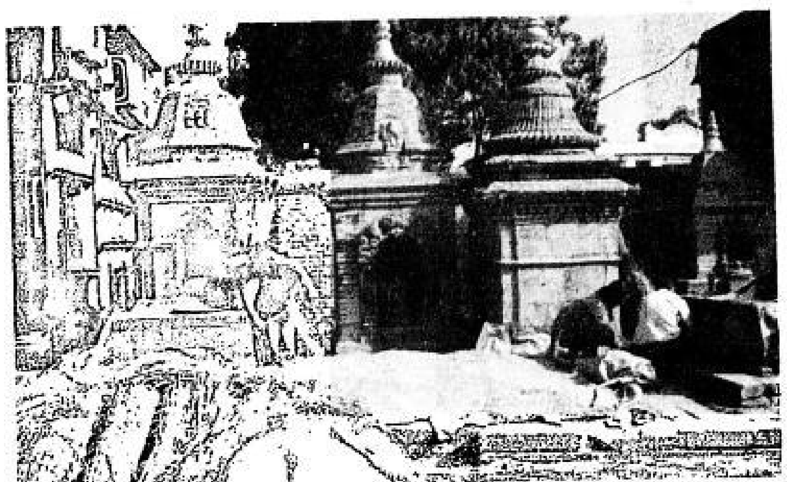
Liza Ilarde, editor in chief of JetSet Travel magazine, bought gorgeously huge luminous pearl necklaces. **Pepper Teehankee** of the Philippine Star also bought some for his mother. **Tara Sering** of PAL's Mabuhay Magazine grabbed several colorful Tibetan materials for skirts and blouses, while the darling head of the group, PAL's energetic tour division manager **Desi Martin**, opted for the fabulous silver jewelry.

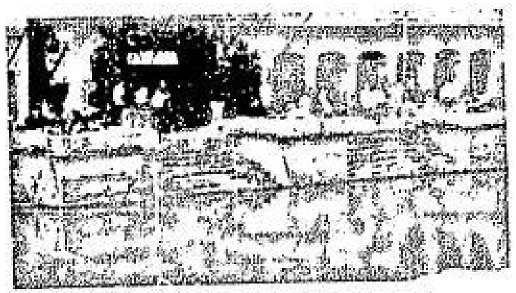
Moi scouted around for some superb vegetarian snacks and resolved to do my shopping on our last night in Kathmandu, dahlings.

COLOSSAL Stupa, one of the biggest in the world and center of Tibetan Buddhism, at Buddhanath Temple

ENTRANCE to the Temple of Lord Shiva, strictly for Hindus only, in Kathmandu

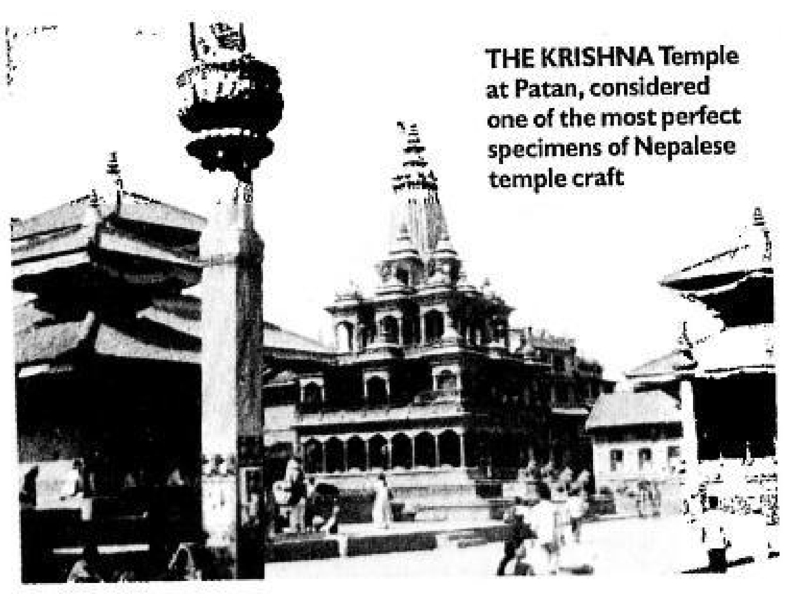

CENTURY-OLD restored windows used at the magnificent Dwarika's Hotel, Kathmandu


WOMEN cleaning *palay* in one of the smaller squares at the grand Patan Durbar Square


CREMATION inside the Pashupatinath Temple by Bagmati River

SPECTACULAR view of Mount Everest from our plane window

tibet store
TIBETAN hats in all shapes and colors


THE KRISHNA Temple at Patan, considered one of the most perfect specimens of Nepalese temple craft

OUR certificates after our flight on Yeti Airlines around Mount Everest

TOURIST and locals alike watch cremation rituals from across the river.

OLD men in colorful traditional garb

2nd Zobel polo cup on Sunday

GOINGS ON

VAN HEUSEN PRESENTS THE SECOND Enrique Zobel Memorial Polo Cup Feb. 11, 2 p.m., at the Manila Polo Club. The Zobel Cup features the country's finest polo players, sports enthusiasts, as well as visiting players from Chile and Spain. In support of the Enrique Zobel Foundation, Van Heusen has created a special line called the Enrique Zobel Collection. Part of the proceeds from every purchase of items in the Zobel line goes to the foundation's projects for underprivileged members of society. The special collection is available at all Van Heusen boutiques in leading shopping malls.

VALENTINE TREATS. Visitors of Westgate Center in Alabang are getting Valentine treats. A string quartet will serenade diners at Cul de Sac Feb. 14 while mimes dressed in traditional French costumes will be giving out balloons. Ecole de Ballet Manille will present a Valentine concert Feb. 17, 7 p.m.

To welcome the year of the Fire Boar on Feb. 18, the White Tiger Wushu Zhan Group will present the traditional Lion Dragon Dance 4-9 p.m. Westgate Alabang is at Filinvest Corporate City, Alabang, Muntinlupa City; tel. 8503516 and 8503515, website www.westgatefilinvest.com.

ROMANTIC INTERLUDES. Festival Supermall presents Sofia's Bossa Nova renditions Feb. 11, and Sabrina Feb. 18, 3 p.m., at the Carousel Court. The Leggiero String Quartet serenades couples Feb. 14 at Chef's Avenue. A pre-Valentine compatibility test and numerology will be held Feb. 11, 3-5 p.m., at the Carousel Court. Festival Supermall is at Filinvest Corporate City, Alabang, Muntinlupa; tel. 8503514.

FESTIVAL. The New Zealand Festival will be held Feb. 9-11 at The Podium. The three-day fair and exhibit will highlight the best of New Zealand, including its products. Other festival events include a face painting session on Maori symbols Feb. 10-11, 1-8 p.m.; culinary demo by Fonterra at Living Well Feb. 10, 3 p.m.; and a cultural performance by Benildanze Feb. 10, 6 p.m.

LECTURE. National Artist and Ramon Magsaysay laureate Bienvenido Lumbera will deliver the 39th St. Thomas More Lecture of the Faculty of Arts and Letters of the University of Santo Tomas 2 p.m. today at the Thomas Aquinas Research Complex auditorium, UST campus, España, Manila. He will lecture about the writing of history. The occasion will also be UST's testimonial to Lumbera for becoming the newest National Artist for Literature. Lumbera finished his Litt.B. Journalism in the old UST Faculty of Philosophy and Letters, forerunner of today's Arts and Letters, and was staffer of the Varsitarian, the official student paper of UST.

WELLNESS FEST. The Psychic and Wellness Festival will be held Feb. 14-16, 9 a.m.-5 p.m., at Studio 1 Plaza (tel. 3717016), ABS-CBN main building, Eugenio Lopez Drive, South Triangle, QC. Free lectures and demonstrations on psychic healing, Noble Innergizer therapy, natural beauty care, food supplements and other holistic healing services will be conducted.

SEMINAR. The Philippine Society of Librarians and Information Specialists, with the Integrated Society of Information Professionals, will hold a seminar-workshop on "Trends and Strategies in Indexing, Cataloging and Abstracting" Feb. 22-24 at the Cooyeesan Plaza Hotel, Naguilian Rd. cor. Asin Rd., Baguio City. Call 7241994, 5278351, 0917-8664357 and 0919-5180128.

SEMINAR. The Philippine Trade Training Center (PTTC) of the Department of Trade and Industry (DTI) will conduct a seminar on Effective Selling Skills today at Seminar Room B, 2/F PTTC Building, Sen. Gil Puyat Ave., cor. Roxas Blvd., Pasay City; tel. 8341344-49 or 8319988.

UK FAIR. British Council Philippines will hold the annual Education UK Fair Feb. 23-24, 2-7 p.m., at the Kamia Room of Edsa Shangri-La Hotel. The council's website is www.britishcouncil.org.ph, tel. 9141011-14.

PERFORMANCE. Susan Fernandez is the featured performer of Paco Park Presents, 7 p.m. today. The show, "Romantic Strains," is part of the celebration of German Month this February. The repertoire will include a few European love songs, Filipino *kundiman* and ballads. Fernandez, a singer, teacher and advocate, will accompany herself on the guitar. Paco Park Presents is open to the public. Admission is free.

PROMO WINNER. Ma. Lourdes Nicandro of Mandaluyong City won a brand-new Mercedes Benz B-Class in the recent Bring Home Mercedes raffle promo. Consolation prize winners were Teresita G. Salvador, Grace M. Jacala, Teodorico T. Salazar, Raisa S. Trenas and Arnulfo B. Pabroa.

CONFERENCES. Professor Hans Henrik Knoop, renowned Danish educator, is coming to the Philippines to hold a series of conferences in Manila, Pampanga, Pangasinan and Baguio Feb. 13-17. Call (045)9822463, (075)5425965, (074)4470664.

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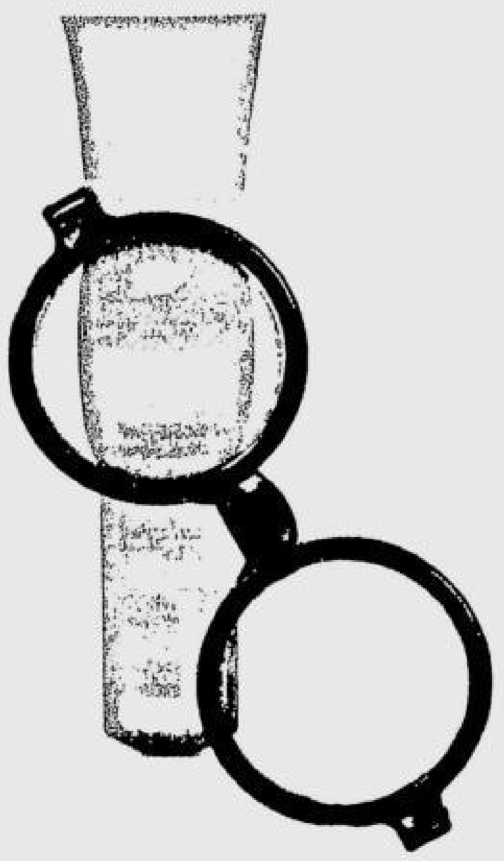

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Thelma Sioson San Juan

Surrendering to laser, finally

In a week or so after my Fraxel treatment, my skin was smooth, even-toned, finer

WRITING ABOUT IT IS ONE thing, subjecting yourself to it is another.

By "it" I mean lipo, botox, mesotherapy or anything in the ever-expanding menu of beauty and slimming treatments. I'm scared to try it. Letting yourself be zapped into a desired form and size takes some amount of daring, if not courage. And I'm not known for bravery outside the office.

Then in one prim and proper Bulgari dinner, **Vicki Belo**, typically Vicki, half-hollered from across the room to me that it's about time I tried Fraxel, or, since she was on a roll prescribing, Thermage, the non-invasive facelift many women are trying. I wasn't ready to commit to a facelift in a chi-chi dinner, not because half of Manila's swell society was eavesdropping, but because I'm in a state of denial about such trivial stuff as age, and moreover, because I'm not fond of knives—especially if they're poked into my back or on my face.

But then this Fraxel might not be a bad idea. It's a non-invasive, laser treatment, and laser has become part and parcel—quite literally—of the images of one-half (ok, three-fourths) of women you see in this section.

Wrinkles and blemishes aren't my problem; big pores and pimple scars are. Not that one's pores and pimple scars are supposed to be a public issue affecting my readers' lives, but, I believe, they reflect the evolution of beauty treatment and skincare in this country. (How on earth did we get to that?)

The development of beauty/cosmetic procedures and skincare in the country has galloped in the last few years. You can't compare it to what it was a decade ago. Today there's Belo and all these multimillion-peso state-of-the-art technology, from radio frequency to laser.

Today, girls and guys in their "tweens" go to a "derma" almost as their rite of passage. Twenty years ago, there was only the prick-and-bleed method, and we didn't have as many "derma" to choose from.

My skincare must be representative of that of many men and women in the country. Mommy would wake me up way before 6 in the morning, so we could be among the first to sign up in the day's registry of "Mrs. Uy," that "doctor" (she was not) or that "derma" (she wasn't) in the teenhood of many of us.

An appointment with her was prized. Long before sunrise the queues began in front of that huge building on Edsa. And when you did get treated, you were given a variety of cream. Mommy's generation swore by her. As for mine—I remember only the pricking and my red face after that.

To make ancient history short, scars remain from such initiation into skin treatment. Traditional peeling didn't quite work. Before Fraxel, the only procedures I had were the power peel and the popular IPL (Intense Pulsed Light Rejuvenation).

Microthermal treatment

Approved by the FDA, Fraxel, then Metro beauty editor **Mel Cuevas** wrote, is like doing a "Photoshop" of your face.

Fraxel (for fraction) produces thousands of deep, tiny columns of light directed at each skin zone of your face. Each zone is subjected to microthermal treatment—one small area at a time, pixel by pixel, like in Photoshop. As its name indicates, it's a fractional approach to skin.

This gradual, focused-to-a-fraction application of laser to the skin allows you to heal faster. Which means not much downtime needed after your treatment, and no scarring. It also stimulates collagen to make skin softer and tighter, less oily—and, I was promised, reduce the pores.

Armed with this background info, I went to the Belo Clinic at Medical Plaza. I was ushered to a room where an anesthetic cream would be applied on my face; the anesthesia for this procedure is topical. So as the piped-in **James Ingram** (I think) sang and filled the room—"Just once, can we do it just once"—I was doing what I was sure would not be just once, but a series of six treatments.

It took about 45 minutes for the anesthetic cream to take effect. Then I was given half a slice of 5-mg Valium, no big deal for me, and escorted up to the clinic for the procedure. What met me there was the sight of a man who apparently had just had his Fraxel. He must have been in his 60s—vain men at that age? I was surprised to learn that many guys undergo Fraxel, as young as 17 or as old as 70. Beauty and skincare are gaining a growing market: the men.

Anyway, this 60ish man held a ball of ice to his face, which was puffy and red. Looking at him, I knew I was staring at my very near future. If he could take it, I could. The attendant handed me a pair of socks to slip into before I went inside the room. The socks were pink and had Tweety. I must remember to ask Vicki what's this with cartoon socks—Tweety, Mickey Mouse, et al.

You lie down, your eyes are covered. They apply a blue gel on your face, where the laser will find its mark. As the doctor beams the laser on a zone on your face, another holds what feels like a nozzle blowing out a blast of air on your face. You feel as if you're drowning under this blast of air; I didn't like that at all. But it's supposed to counteract the heat of the laser.

The feeling of the laser is a different thing altogether. It's painful, like minute, lightning-speed slicings of a knife. I could only whine under my breath, too suppressed to be noticed by the good doctor who then went about her job untouched by my need for sympathy.

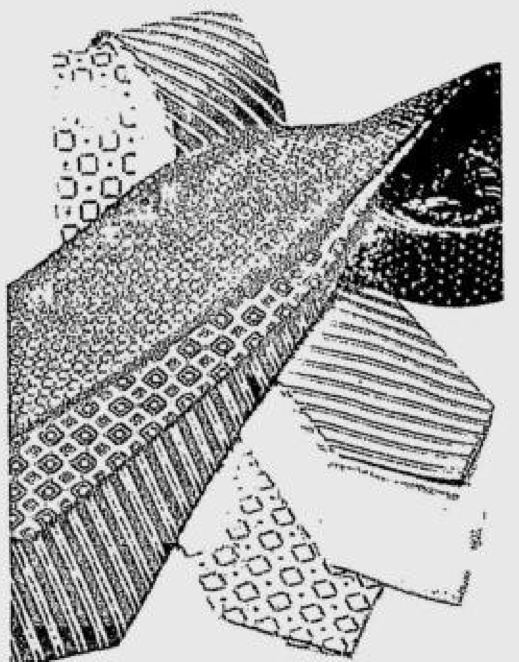
It was over in 25 minutes. I stepped out of the room, shed off my Tweety socks, and saw my face puffed up. I was given a ball (balloon actually in jewel colors) of ice to press against it. The pain after the treatment was gone; you didn't even feel discomfort.

In a day or two my old skin began to peel. In a week or so, my skin was smooth, even-toned, finer. As an envious **Carlo Tadiar** said: I was "aglow." He wanted the same Fraxel.

Since then I've had my second and then third treatments. I approached my second treatment with a feeling of dread because by then I knew the pain. Surprisingly, it wasn't even half as painful. The third treatment was a breeze. In time, I hope my pimple scars would be smoothened out, or at least minimized.

The post-treatment skin is actually low-maintenance. Three days after each treatment, I can resume my Pond's Age Miracle regimen of toner-serum-cream. Better yet, my skin is not as sun-sensitive. It's not like the Obagi-treated skin of my girl friends I saw in the last few years—so red-skinned and they couldn't even go anywhere near the sunlight.

Best of all, I still have my good old face.



Sophisticated casuals

HIS AND HERS JACKETS, SWEATERS AND wallets are in the new collections from Jack Nicklaus.

For her, tailored hipster jackets come in black, white and wine. For sporty women, the lightweight merino cable-knit sweaters definitely make the grade in blue, fuchsia and beige. The ultimate fail-safe Valentine present for women: Jack Nicklaus' ladies' wallets in crocodile and cow leather in fuchsia, bone, navy and bright red.

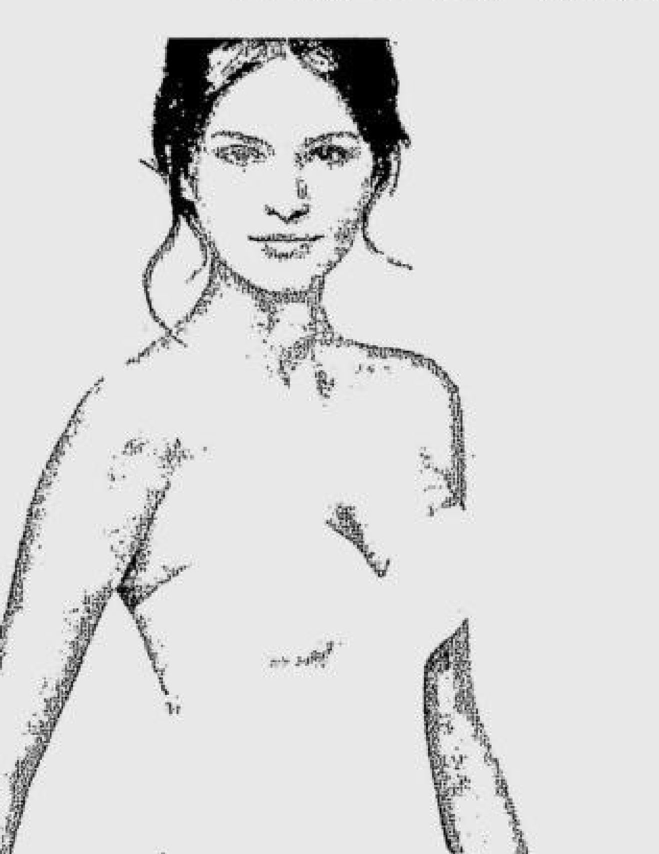
For men, there are long or quilted coats in classic black and heather oak; sweaters and jackets; zip pullover vests; V-neck merino wool, button mock neck with elbow detail; and zip pullover merino wool jacket in luscious colors.

Passcase and billfolds in black and brown complete the lineup of Jack Nicklaus' his and hers gift suggestions for Valentine.

Jack Nicklaus apparel is exclusively marketed by Rustan Marketing Corp. and is available at Rustan's Makati, Shangri-La Mall and other branches.

Sweet almost-nothings

BY ALL MEANS GET THE most potent of love potions but don't forget to pay extra attention to what lies beneath your glamour threads. Worn-out undies are soooo unromantic, and bad-fitting brassiers are definitely a turn-off. Oh, and if you can't wear passion to bed, at least wrap up in something luxurious and comfy. You owe it to yourself.



RETIRE that antiquated girdle and go for this Maidenform's Dream Bustier. It is perfect for strapless and backless tops that hug around the waist. It has slimming effect around the bodice, providing a leaner and longer silhouette. Maidenform, makers of the phenomenal Dream Bra, also offers Dream Strapless Push-Up bra with Clear Convertible Straps. Exclusively distributed by Rustan Marketing Corp., Maidenform Dream Collection is available in all leading department stores nationwide.

LOUNGING divas can luxuriate in Presence's kimono robe paired with Caprice's black-patterned bra and thong panties. Also available at Debenham's are Presence slips, Maine New England pajamas, Red Herrings boxer shorts and robe wraps, among others. Debenhams is at Rustan's Makati and Shangri-La Mall.

NOT good with words? Slip into this lace chemise by Body Language, a new line of lingerie exclusively distributed by Fuller Life Direct Selling Philippines, Inc. (formerly known as Sara Lee Direct Selling Philippines, Inc.). Call 1-800-10-FULLER1 or fax 8672279.

DARE to wear a revealing neckline only if you have the Clearly Daring Wonderbra, a deep-plunge push-up bra with a clear center gore and soft seamless cups. Made from soft, smooth fabric, and available in black or mocha, this Wonderbra has triple straps for added drama and sophistication. Wonderbra brassieres are available in sizes 32 A/B to 36 A/B and come with matching panties.

VALENTINE PROMO

What goes perfectly with Arrow's wide assortment of dress shirts in the season's latest hues? A Perfect Match promo that gives a generous 20-percent discount on all men's and ladies' jackets and slacks from America's favored brand in quality men's (and now women's) apparel. Also included in this special Valentine's offer are Arrow's classy suit jackets and sporty track jackets, exclusive only to all Arrow boutiques. Visit Arrow's latest stand-up boutique at the posh The Block, SM City North Edsa, QC.

Gifts from the heart

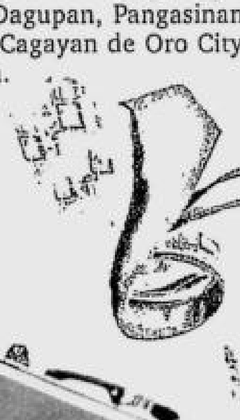
ROBINSONS DEPARTMENT STORE (RDS) IS brimming with Valentine gift options. Here are some of them:

- Synchronize your schedules with His and Hers Watches from Timex with the promise to spend more time together.
- Express your affection by gifting dad with a new Cellini belt. He will also appreciate a few pieces of stylish A. Caruso neckties to pair off with his new polo from Chancellor.
- Hallmark greeting cards affirm your true feelings, while a a box of Cadbury chocolates will melt her heart.

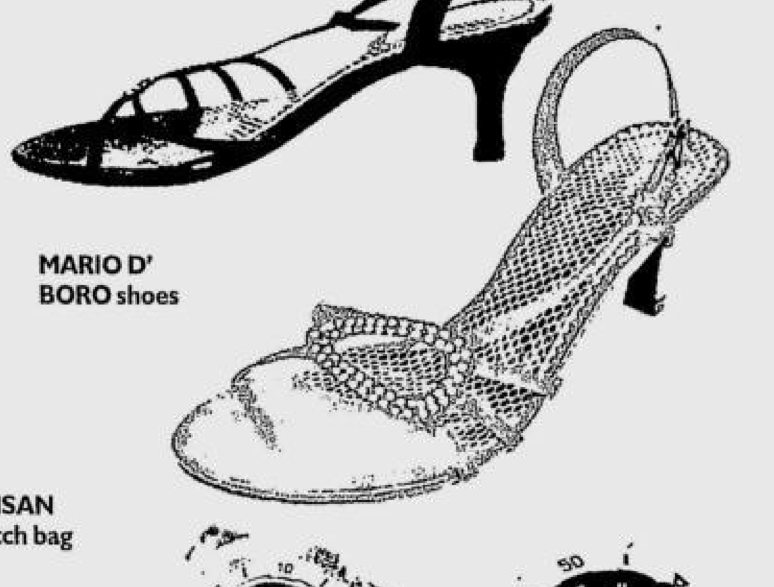
Don't keep your feelings bottled up. There are ways to express them especially through perfumes like Moschino I Love Love, Aigner Too Feminine and choice scents from Versace, while a set of Dazzles jewelry will make her feel she's a precious gem.

- Is she a shop-a-holic? Then she cannot resist a pair of chic evening shoes from Mario d' Boro or a Crisan evening clutch bag.
- For kids, there are Valentine pillows from Trendsetter.

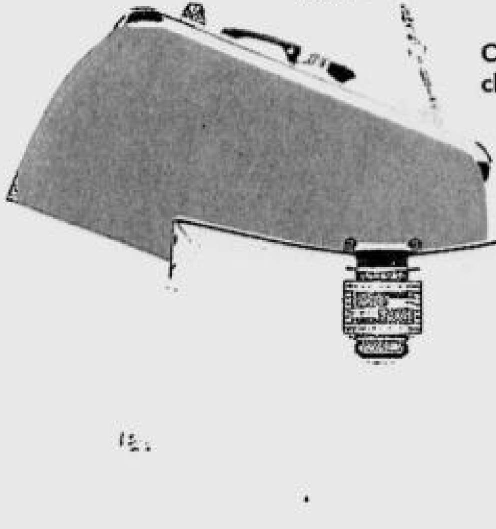
Get a chance to take home a free cuddly teddy bear for a minimum single receipt purchase of P1,000 from Feb. 9-14. Promo ongoing at all RDS branches in Robinsons Malls, Waltermart Malls, Metropolis Star and Festival Mall in Alabang; Nepo Mall Pampanga and Dagupan, Pangasinan; and Limketkai Mall, Cagayan de Oro City. Visit www.rds.com.ph.



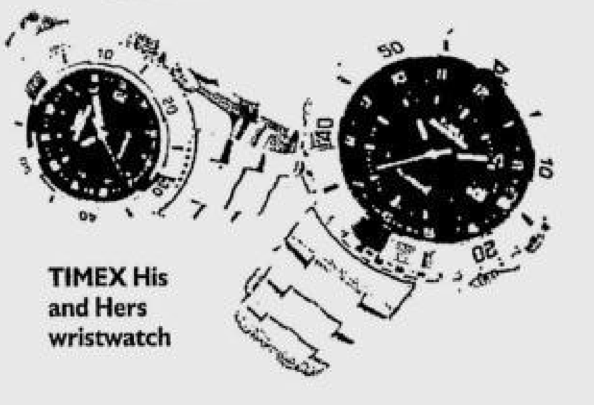
CARUSO neckties



MARIO D' BORO shoes



CRISAN clutch bag



TIMEX His and Hers wristwatch

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ENTERTAINME

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RYAN Phillippe: "This is the most difficult time in my life."

Ryan still hurts over split from Reese

... plus, songs of Sharon, Kuh & Anthony are played in Kirk Douglas Theatre, LA

ONLY IN HOLLYWOOD

Ruben V. Nepales

LOS ANGELES—"WHAT IS ON MY mind right now is the heartache and my children, but I'll persevere," Ryan Phillippe said of his separation from Reese Witherspoon in a recent press conference at the Four Seasons Hotel.

Ryan was speaking to journalists to promote

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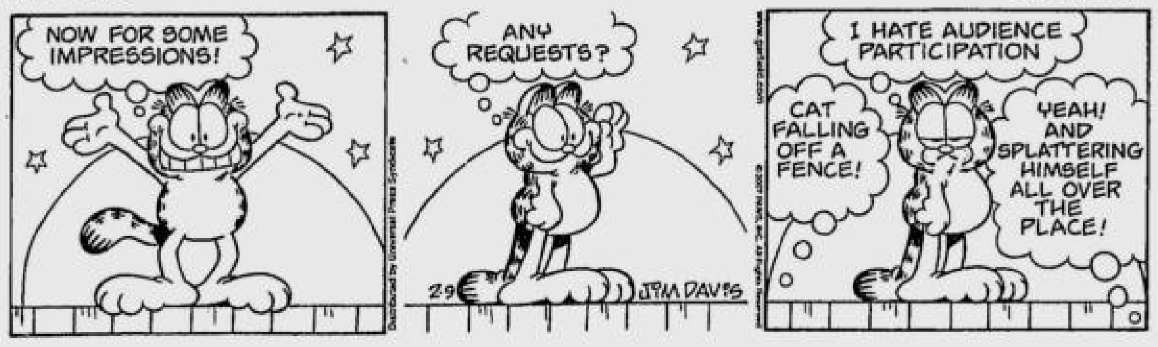
FRIDAY, FEBRUARY 9, 2007

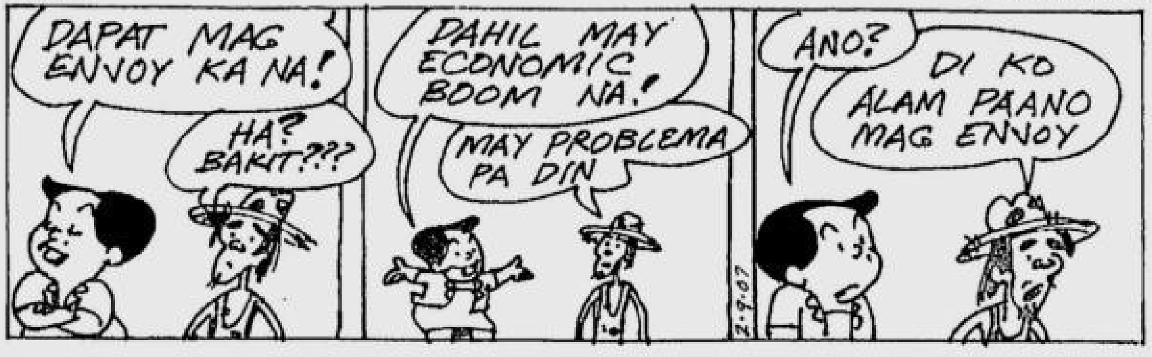
GARFIELD

BY JIM DAVIS


NOW FOR SOME IMPRESSIONS!
ANY REQUESTS?
I HATE AUDIENCE PARTICIPATION
CAT FALLING OFF A FENCE!
YEAH! AND SPLATTERING HIMSELF ALL OVER THE PLACE!
JIM DAVIS

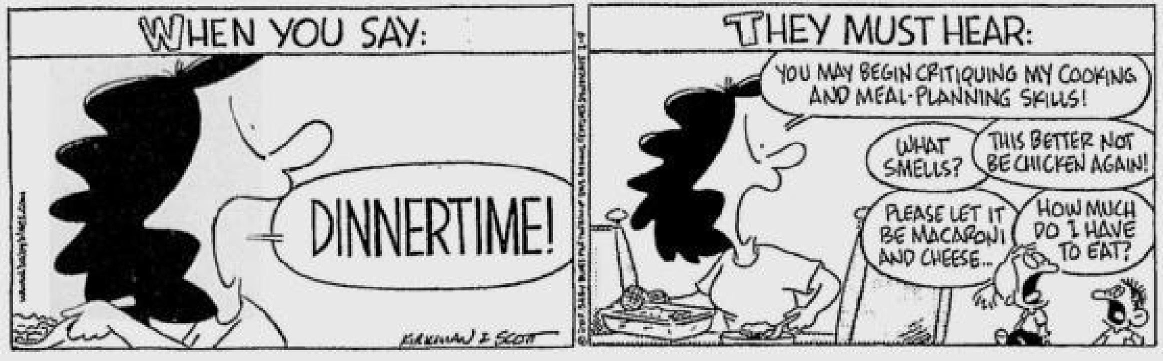
A. LIPIN

BY JESS ABRERA


DAPAT MAG ENJOY KA NA!
HA? BAKIT???
DAHIL MAY ECONOMIC BOOM NA!
MAY PROBLEMA PA DIN
ANO?
DI KO ALAM PAANO MAG ENJOY
2.9.07

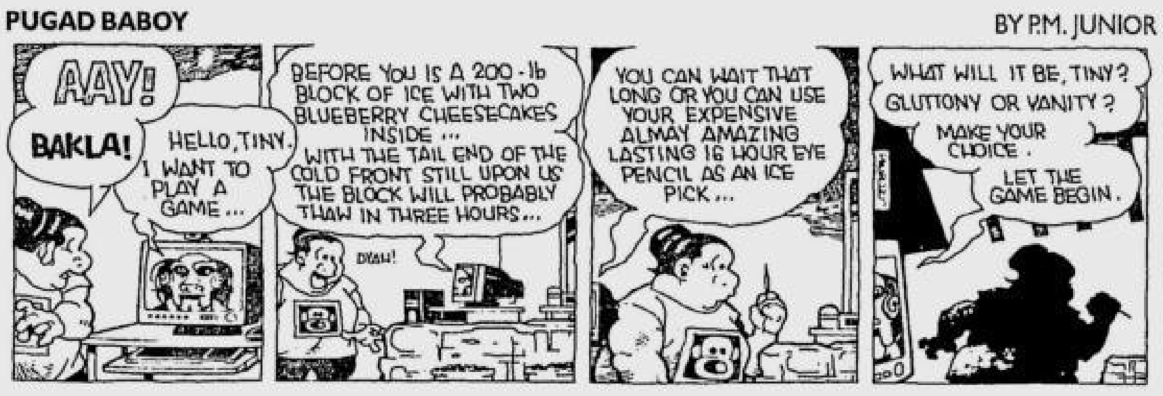
BABY BLUES

BY JERRY SCOTT


WHEN YOU SAY:
DINNERTIME!
THEY MUST HEAR:
YOU MAY BEGIN CRITIQUING MY COOKING AND MEAL-PLANNING SKILLS!
WHAT SMELLS?
THIS BETTER NOT BE CHICKEN AGAIN!
PLEASE LET IT BE MACARONI AND CHEESE...
HOW MUCH DO I HAVE TO EAT?
KIRKMAN & SCOTT

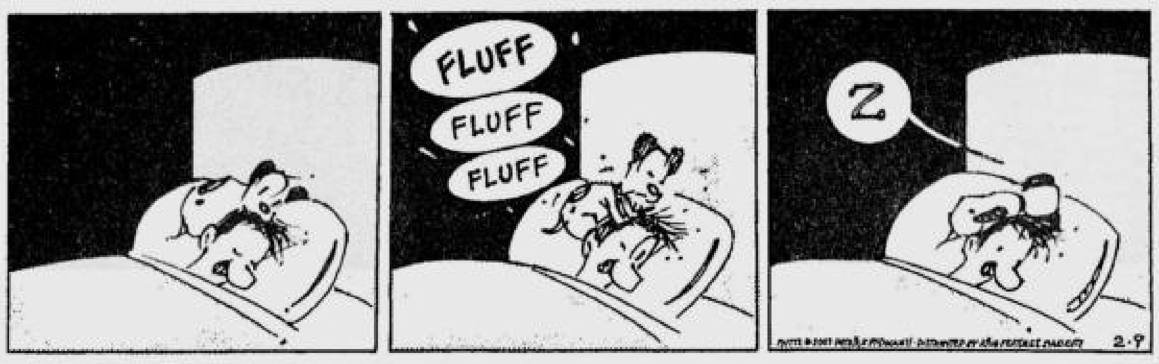
PUGAD BABOY

BY P.M. JUNIOR


AAY!
BAKLA!
HELLO, TINY. I WANT TO PLAY A GAME...
BEFORE YOU IS A 200-lb BLOCK OF ICE WITH TWO BLUEBERRY CHEESECAKES INSIDE... WITH THE TAIL END OF THE COLD FRONT STILL UPON US THE BLOCK WILL PROBABLY THAW IN THREE HOURS...
DYAH!
YOU CAN WAIT THAT LONG OR YOU CAN USE YOUR EXPENSIVE ALMAY AMAZING LASTING 16 HOUR EYE PENCIL AS AN ICE PICK...
WHAT WILL IT BE, TINY? GLUTTONY OR VANITY?
MAKE YOUR CHOICE.
LET THE GAME BEGIN.

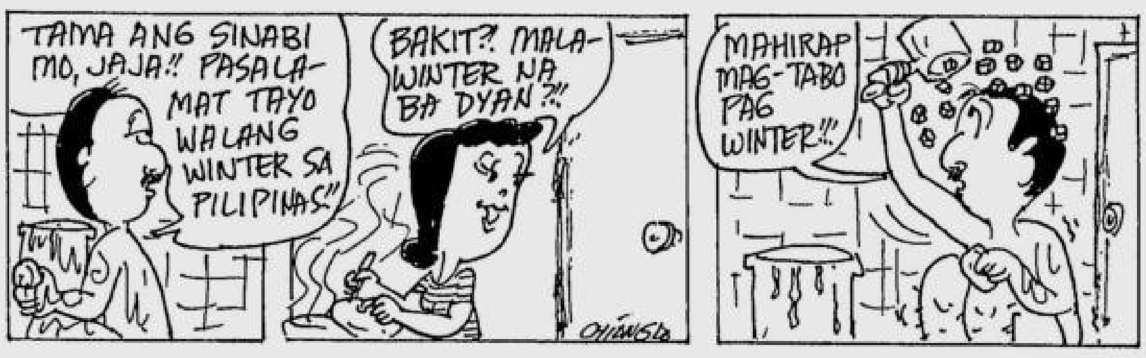
MUTTS

BY PATRICK McDONNELL


FLUFF
FLUFF
FLUFF
Z
2.9

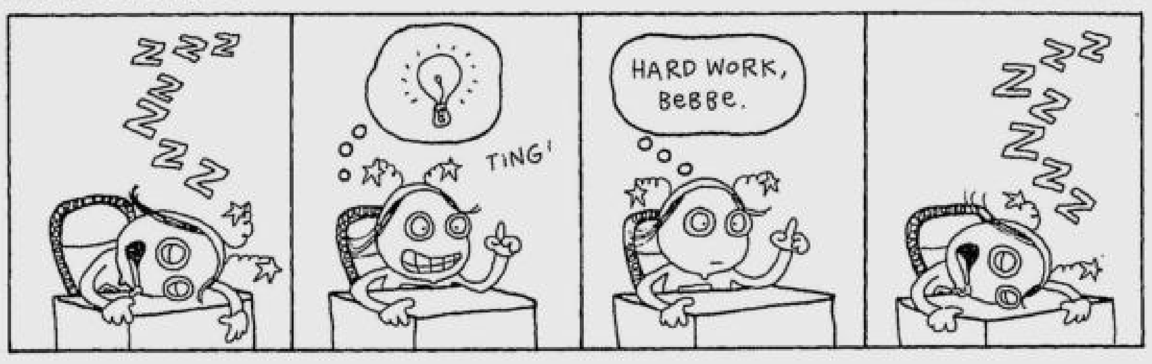
LOVEKNOTS

BY ELIZABETH CHIONGLO


TAMA ANG SINABI MO, JAJA!! PASALAMAT TAYO WALANG WINTER SA PILIPINAS!!
BAKIT?! MALA-WINTER NA BA DYAN?!!
MAHIRAP MAG-TABO PAG WINTER!!
CHIONGLO

ATOMO AND WEBOY

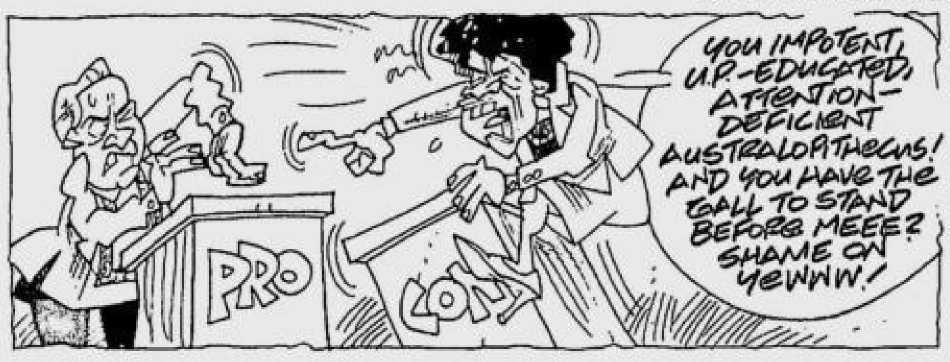
BY LYRA GARCELLANO


ZZZ ZZZ
TING!
HARD WORK, BEBBE.
ZZZZZ

DIVINE COMEDY

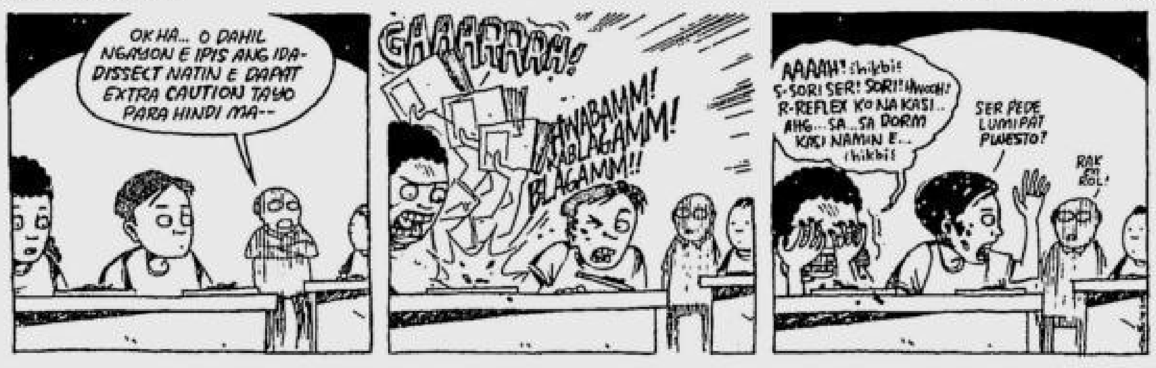
BY STEVEN PABALINAS

HUWAG NA
HUWAG
PUMASOK SA
ISANG
THEOLOGICAL
DEBATE KUNG
ANG
MAKAKALABAN
MO AY ISANG
BABAE.
LALONG-LALO NA
KUNG ANG
PANGALAN NYA
AY SI MIRIAM


YOU IMPOTENT, U.P.-EDUCATED, ATTENTION-DEFICIENT AUSTRALOPITHECUS! AND YOU HAVE THE GALL TO STAND BEFORE MEEE? SHAME ON YEWWW!
PRO
CON

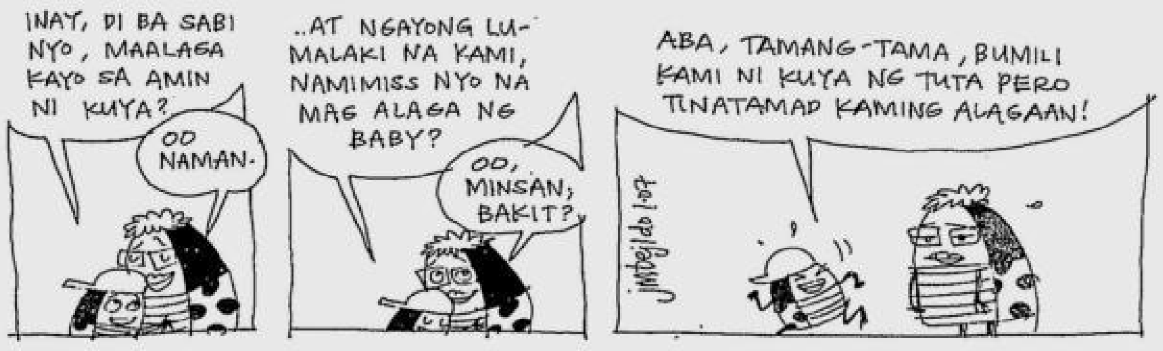
KIKO MACHINE

BY MANIX ABRERA


OK HA... O DAHIL NGAYON E IPIS ANG IDA-DISSECT NATIN E DAPAT EXTRA CAUTION TAYO PARA HINDI MA--
GAAARRAAH!
WANABAMM! WABLAGAMM! BLAGAMM!!
AAAAH! shikbi! S-SORI SER! SORI! hwoh! R-REFLEX KO NA KASI.. AHG... SA... SA DORM KASI NAMIN E... shikbi!
SER PEDE LUMIPAT PUWESTO?
RAK EN ROL!

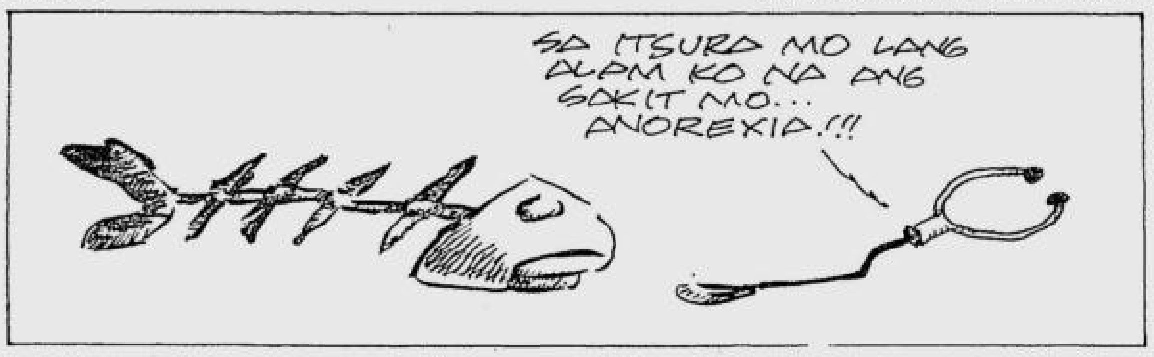
MIKROKOSMOS

BY JOMIKE TEJIDO


INAY, DI BA SABI NYO, MAALAGA KAYO SA AMIN NI KUYA?
OO NAMAN.
..AT NGAYONG LUMALAKI NA KAMI, NAMIMISS NYO NA MAG ALAGA NG BABY?
OO, MINSAN, BAKIT?
ABA, TAMANG-TAMA, BUMILI KAMI NI KUYA NG TUTA PERO TINATAMAD KAMING ALAGAAN!
jmtejido 1.07

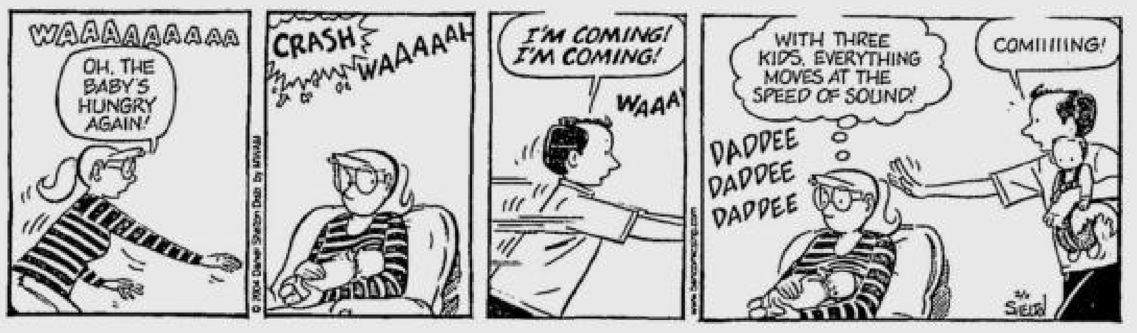
TULDOK

BY PAPU AND TATUM MILAMBILING


SA ITSURA MO LANG ALAM KO NA ANG SAKIT MO... ANOREXIA!!!

BEN

BY DANIEL SHELTON


WAAAAAAAAA
OH, THE BABY'S HUNGRY AGAIN!
CRASH
WAAAAAH
I'M COMING! I'M COMING!
WAAA
WITH THREE KIDS, EVERYTHING MOVES AT THE SPEED OF SOUND!
COMIIIIING!
DADDEE DADDEE DADDEE

DAILY CROSSWORD

ACROSS
1 Wide open
6 Bud holder
10 Carry by hand
14 Diet guru Jenny
15 Gambling city
16 Lost traction
17 Famous last words?
20 Novelist Umberto
21 Writer Easton Ellis
22 Delicately pretty
23 Democratic mascots
25 Skunk's defense
26 Too tolerant
27 Coming up
28 Explorer Heyerdahl
32 Porky Pig's nose
35 Electropositive element
37 Kid's concoction
38 Famous last words?
41 Gallery showing
42 Crystal set, e.g.
43 Had in mind
44 Word with camp or out
46 Quick escape
47 Flapper's scarf
48 Huck's vessel
50 Halter cousin
54 Aid
57 Honey bunch
58 Pugilists' org.
59 Famous last words?
62 Estrada of "CHiPs"
63 Molokai neighbor
64 Losing efforts?
65 Gentlemen
66 Checked out
67 All atwitter

DOWN
1 Hurt all over
2 Hellenic: pref.
3 Spelling of TV
4 Chart type
5 Meringue-making tool
6 Kilmer poem
7 Adam of "Batman"
8 Cozy stopover
9 Bargain
10 Souvenir buy
11 Lena of "Chocolat"
12 Delicate color
13 High-strung
18 Gemsbok
19 Lao-Tzu's ideal
24 Supermodel Heidi
25 Trump, maybe
27 Wranglers' material
29 Merry sounds
30 Host of Valhalla
31 Recuperate
32 Hefty slice
33 Wolfe of fiction
34 Milanese eight
35 Upset with
36 Soft drink
39 Regrouping period, in sport
40 Warp-resistant wood
45 Plays for a sucker
47 Heavyweight champ Max
49 Shade of blond
50 Halfhearted
51 Nestling noise
52 Last words
53 Soft touch
54 Dazzles
55 Rani's wrap
56 Culinary directive
57 Sad
60 Set (down)
61 Actor Diesel

1	2	3	4	5	■	6	7	8	9	■	10	11	12	13
14					■	15				■	16			
17					18					19				
20			■	21				■	22					
23			24				■	25				■	■	■
■	■	■	26			■	27			■	28	29	30	31
32	33	34			■	35				36	■	37		
38					39						40			
41			■	42					■	43				
44			45	■	46			■	47			■	■	■
■	■	■	48	49			■	50				51	52	53
54	55	56				■	57				■	58		
59						60					61			
62					■	63				■	64			
65					■	66				■	67			

By James E. Buell
Edgewater, FL

2/9/07

Thursday's Puzzle Solved

C	P	R	■	L	A	W	S	■	W	A	F	F	L	E
O	O	O	■	A	M	A	T	■	A	G	L	E	T	S
N	O	S	E	D	I	V	E	■	G	O	U	R	D	S
T	H	E	O	L	D	E	R	W	E	G	E	T	■	■
A	B	A	S	E	■	L	I	E	S	■	■	I	C	U
C	A	T	■	■	S	E	L	A	■	D	F	L	A	T
T	H	E	B	E	T	T	E	R	W	E	W	E	R	E
■	■	■	A	L	I	■	■	■	H	A	I	■	■	■
I	N	S	T	O	R	I	E	S	O	F	W	H	E	N
C	O	H	E	N	■	S	R	T	A	■	■	U	N	E
E	T	O	■	■	D	A	N	A	■	S	E	N	T	A
■	■	W	E	W	E	R	E	Y	O	U	N	G	E	R
L	A	B	R	E	A	■	S	P	I	L	L	A	N	E
S	P	I	N	A	L	■	T	U	S	K	■	R	T	S
D	O	Z	E	N	S	■	S	T	E	S	■	Y	E	T

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2/9/07

HOROSCOPE

YOU BORN TODAY: Many of you have colorful, active lives. You don't do things halfway—you live life to the fullest! You're both spontaneous and hardworking. You try hard (and succeed) to be positive in the face of daunting challenges. You're always dynamic and full of energy. Partnerships or relationships will be important for you in the coming year. Focus on these.

Birthdate of: Alice Walker, author; Carole King, singer; Zhang Ziyi, actress.

ARIES (March 21 to April 19): Your attempt to help someone might be overly optimistic or unrealistic. Be careful. There is such a thing as idiot compassion. It's good to help, but don't be a sucker.

TAURUS (April 20 to May 20): Social occasions will please you today. People want to party! Everybody is in the mood to go overboard about whatever they're doing. (Take notes.)

GEMINI (May 21 to June 20): You feel very generous toward partners and loved ones. However, your judgment might not be correct. If you think you're going overboard about something, you probably are.

CANCER (June 21 to July 22): Be careful about impulses related to work, travel and education today because you might overestimate something. Today, it's easy to kid yourself.

LEO (July 23 to Aug. 22): Others might be extremely generous to you today. However, if you have to divide something, be very careful. It's very easy to misjudge things today.

VIRGO (Aug. 23 to Sept. 22): If you think that family members are making large demands on you today, you don't have to respond. People are asking for the moon right now!

LIBRA (Sept. 23 to Oct. 22): Be careful about promises or estimates you make at work today. It's easy to promise more than you can deliver. Similarly, coworkers might do this with you.

SCORPIO (Oct. 23 to Nov. 21): Be very careful with financial speculation today. Things could look better than they actually are. Forewarned is forearmed.

SAGITTARIUS (Nov. 22 to Dec. 21): Be careful when shopping, and likewise, be careful with all your financial transactions today. People are making large gestures. Don't do anything you'll regret later.

CAPRICORN (Dec. 22 to Jan. 19): Be careful when signing contracts or agreeing to important negotiations. People are inclined to promise pie-in-the-sky deals. Try your best to stay realistic. (Head in the clouds, but feet on the ground.)

AQUARIUS (Jan. 20 to Feb. 18): Enjoy good times with friends today. However, this is not a good day to lend money to a friend. If you're shopping for gifts for others, tone it down a bit. It's the thought that counts.

PISCES (Feb. 19 to March 20): You feel joyful and happy today; however, it's easy to go overboard. Be careful about indulging or being overserved. (You know who you are.) Don't do anything that you're going to regret later.

CONCEPTIS SU DOKU

Conceptis Sudoku

by Dave Green

					3			
		7	2	5		6		
	6	2		4			5	
	1							4
	5	6		3		9	7	
4							8	
	3			8		4	1	
		5		7	1	8		
			9					

Difficulty Level ★★★★

2/09

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HOW TO PLAY SU DOKU

Fill the grid so that every column, every row and every 3x3 box contains the digits 1 to 9.
Tips and program at www.sudoku.com

Answer to previous puzzle

8	1	2	7	3	5	6	9	4
9	3	5	4	6	8	1	2	7
6	4	7	2	1	9	3	5	8
3	6	8	1	4	2	5	7	9
7	9	4	5	8	6	2	3	1
2	5	1	3	9	7	8	4	6
4	7	6	8	2	3	9	1	5
5	8	3	9	7	1	4	6	2
1	2	9	6	5	4	7	8	3

Difficulty Level ★★★

RUSHES

Three stars on their Oscar nods

BEVERLY HILLS, California—Helen Mirren says voting for herself in this year's Oscars race was harder than anything she had to do while making "The Queen."

The British veteran, favorite to scoop the Best Actress trophy on Feb. 25, said she had thought twice about ticking her own box on the ballot papers.

"It's a terrible moment, an awful moral dilemma," Mirren, 61, told reporters ahead of the Oscars nominees luncheon on Monday.

FOREST WHITAKER

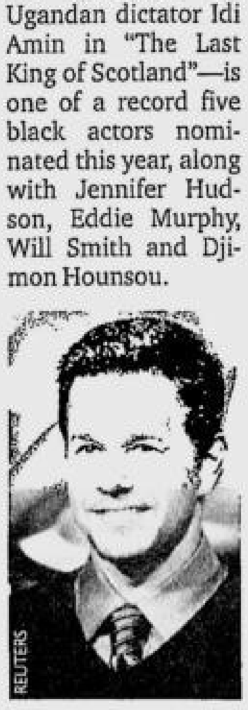
Not a protest

Best Actor contender Forest Whitaker said an annual awards show held to honor black actors should not be interpreted as a political statement against the Academy Awards.

"It's about people being celebrated by a community ... not a protest or a statement," Whitaker said at the luncheon.

Whitaker was referring to a story in the latest Newsweek magazine referring to a "secret meeting" held by black stars in Hollywood to honor each other.

Whitaker—on course to become only the third African-American actor to win the Best Actor prize in 78 years for his portrayal of Ugandan dictator Idi Amin in "The Last King of Scotland"—is one of a record five black actors nominated this year, along with Jennifer Hudson, Eddie Murphy, Will Smith and Djimon Hounsou.



REUTERS

MARK WAHLBERG

Hard knocks

Mark Wahlberg said his crime-ridden formative years were behind his surprise Best Supporting Actor nomination for "The Departed."

Wahlberg plays a foul-mouthed Boston detective in the Martin Scorsese-directed crime drama. He said he had used the experience of several brushes with the law in his youth to get into character.

The good news made his parents cry, he added, recalling that "one of them had to get on a train [once] and bail me out with money they were going to use to buy food for their nine kids." *AFP*

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GALLERIA

632-9118

1 NIGHT at the MUSEUM • THX
12:00 2:30 5:00 7:30 10:00

2 THE HOLIDAY
1:30 4:20 7:10 10:00

3 indieSine: COMPOUND
1:30 3:50 6:10 8:30

4 The CURSE of the GOLDEN FLOWER
12:20 2:45 5:10 7:35 10:00

5 HANNIBAL RISING
12:00 2:30 5:00 7:30 10:00

6 THE MESSENGERS
12:20 2:45 5:10 7:35 10:00

7 THE CLEANER
1:25 3:35 5:45 7:55 10:00

8 BLOOD & CHOCOLATE 12:00 2:10 4:20
LITTLE CHILDREN 6:40 9:40

9 APOCALYPTO
1:15 4:10 7:05 10:00

10 CHARLOTTE's WEB
1:25 3:35 5:45 7:55 10:00

ERMITA

Ticket Price P110 • 536-7809 to 12

1 THE HOLIDAY 11:20 2:00 4:40 7:20 10:00

2 NIGHT at the MUSEUM
12:30 2:50 5:10 7:30 10:00

3 HANNIBAL RISING
12:35 3:00 5:25 7:45 10:00

4 THE CLEANER
12:20 2:20 4:20 6:20 8:25 10:00

5 THE MESSENGERS
12:20 2:20 4:20 6:20 8:25 10:00

6 APOCALYPTO
12:35 3:40 6:45 10:00

7 The CURSE of the GOLDEN FLOWER
12:35 3:00 5:25 7:45 10:00

METRO EAST

Ticket Price P100 • 682-8193 • 682-8199

1 THE CLEANER
12:50 2:50 4:50 6:50 9:00

2 THE MESSENGERS
12:50 2:50 4:50 6:50 9:00

3 APOCALYPTO
12:30 3:10 6:00 9:00

4 NIGHT at the MUSEUM
12:00 2:10 4:20 6:40 9:00

5 The CURSE of the GOLDEN FLOWER
1:20 3:55 6:30 9:05

6 BLOOD and CHOCOLATE
12:00 2:10 4:30 6:50 9:10

7 HANNIBAL RISING
12:50 3:35 6:20 9:05

8 THE HOLIDAY
12:30 3:10 6:00 9:00

NOVALICHES

936-2231 / 936-3229-30

1 The CURSE of the GOLDEN FLOWER
2 THE MESSENGERS
3 THE HOLIDAY
4 THE CLEANER
5 APOCALYPTO

PIONEER

Ticket Price P100 • 687-5371

1 THE HOLIDAY
12:05 2:55 5:45 8:35

2 THE MESSENGERS
1:10 3:35 6:00 8:25

3 The CURSE of the GOLDEN FLOWER
1:30 3:55 6:20 8:40

4 HANNIBAL RISING
12:55 3:25 5:55 8:25

hugh grant drew barrymore
music and lyrics
VALENTINE'S DAY 2007

music and lyrics

80's Memorabilia Display

Calling all 80's yuppies!!!
To join, submit any 80's memorabilia (albums, songs and lyrics, records, posters and other music related items) on a half illustration board. Attach description of the entry with your name and age at the lower front of the entry and your complete personal information at the upper right back corner of the entry of the board.

Deadline of submission is on *February 09, 2007*. Submit all entries to the Marketing Department at L4 Robinsons Movieworld Galleria Cinema 5. Winners will get advance screening movie invites and music and lyrics gift packs.

For inquiries, please call the Marketing Department, at 395-2188 locs. 230 / 240

REGULAR Showing: February 14
MTRCB Rating: PG13

STA. ROSA

Ticket Price P75 / 80 (049) 837-0907

1 The CURSE of the GOLDEN FLOWER
2 NIGHT at the MUSEUM
3 LITTLE CHILDREN
4 THE MESSENGERS

LIPA

Ticket Price P90 (043) 757-3664 (043) 312-5870

1 ARTHUR and the INVISIBLES
2 TENACIOUS D
3 AGENT X44
4 BLOOD and CHOCOLATE

DASMARINAS

Ticket Price P75 / 80 (046) 416-4332

1 THE MESSENGERS
2 APOCALYPTO
3 THE CURSE OF THE GOLDEN FLOWER

ANGELES

Ticket Price P90 (045) 892-2348

1 APOCALYPTO
2 CHARLOTTE's WEB
3 THE MESSENGERS
4 The CURSE of the GOLDEN FLOWER

IMUS

Ticket Price P100 (046) 875-3838 (046) 471-8188

1 APOCALYPTO
2 THE MESSENGERS
3 THE HOLIDAY
4 The CURSE of the GOLDEN FLOWER
5 NIGHT at the MUSEUM

STARMILLS

Ticket Price P75 / 80 (045) 875-1927

1 NIGHT at the MUSEUM
2 CHARLOTTE's WEB
3 AGENT X44
4 THE MESSENGERS
5 The CURSE of the GOLDEN FLOWER
6 APOCALYPTO

BACOLOD

Ticket Price P70 (034) 441-0453

1 BLOOD DIAMOND
2 GRIFFIN & PHOENIX
3 NIGHT at the MUSEUM
4 ROB-B-HOOD
5 AGENT X44
6 TENACIOUS D

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- Paul Daza, Philippine Daily Inquirer

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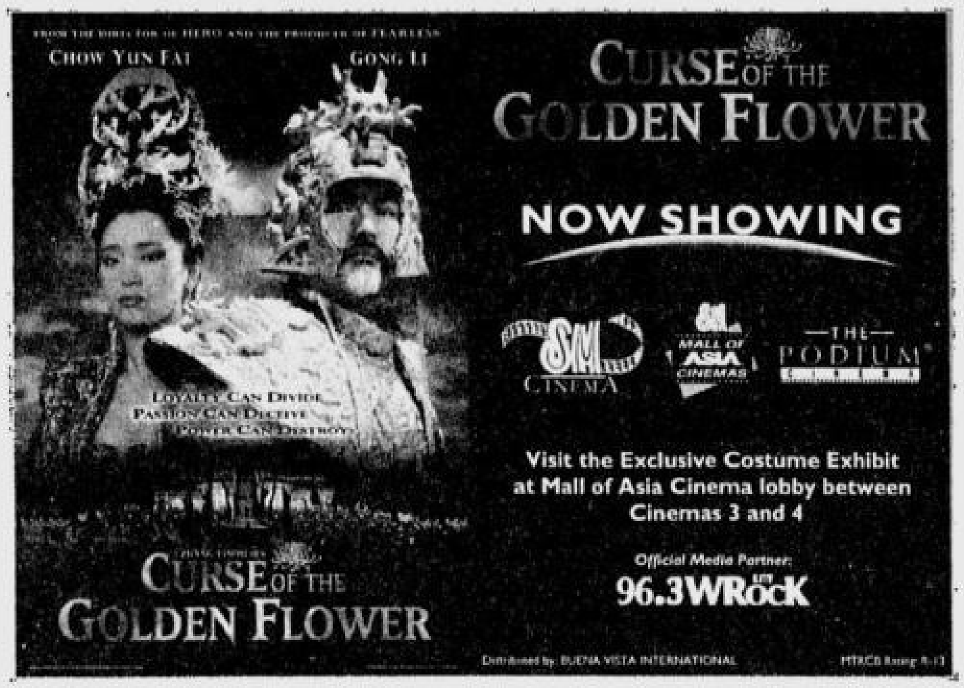

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1 THE MESSENGER
2 DEJA VU
3 THE HOLIDAY
4 THE CLEANER
5 CHARLOTTE'S WEB/ BABEL
6 BLOOD AND CHOCOLATE/ AN INCONVENIENT TRUTH

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CURSE OF THE GOLDEN FLOWER

THE PODIUM
CINEMA 1
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1 THE HOLIDAY
2 BABEL
3 ERAGON
4 ROB-B-HOOD
5 THE HOLIDAY
6 NIGHT AT THE MUSEUM
7 CURSE OF THE GOLDEN FLOWER
8 CHARLOTTE'S WEB
9 BLOOD AND CHOCOLATE
10 AGENT X44
11 THE MESSENGER
12 THE CLEANER

SM MEGACINEMA 633-1901

1 BABEL
2 THE CLEANER
3 BLOOD AND CHOCOLATE
4 THE MESSENGER
5 CURSE OF THE GOLDEN FLOWER
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7 DEJA VU
8 CHARLOTTE'S WEB
9 AGENT X44
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11 ROB-B-HOOD
12 ERAGON

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1 ROB-B-HOOD
2 DEJA VU
3 THE CLEANER
4 BLOOD AND CHOCOLATE
5 NIGHT AT THE MUSEUM
6 THE MESSENGER
7 CURSE OF THE GOLDEN FLOWER
8 CHARLOTTE'S WEB
9 THE HOLIDAY
10 AGENT X44
11 BLOOD DIAMOND
12 ERAGON

SM CITY STA. MESA 716-1416

1 THE MESSENGER
2 THE INVINCIBLE
3 CURSE OF THE GOLDEN FLOWER
4 THE HOLIDAY
5 NIGHT AT THE MUSEUM
6 CHARLOTTE'S WEB
7 ERAGON
8 AGENT X44
9 BLOOD AND CHOCOLATE
10 THE CLEANER

SM CITY SAN LAZARO 786-2488

1 THE MESSENGER
2 CURSE OF THE GOLDEN FLOWER
3 NIGHT AT THE MUSEUM
4 THE HOLIDAY
5 BLOOD AND CHOCOLATE
6 THE CLEANER

SM SOUTHMALL 806-6888

1 THE MESSENGER
2 THE HOLIDAY
3 CURSE OF THE GOLDEN FLOWER
4 NIGHT AT THE MUSEUM
5 THE CLEANER
6 CHARLOTTE'S WEB
7 BLOOD AND CHOCOLATE
8 BABEL
9 AGENT X44

SM CITY BICUTAN 776-3055

1 CURSE OF THE GOLDEN FLOWER
2 THE HOLIDAY
3 THE MESSENGER
4 NIGHT AT THE MUSEUM

SM CITY MANILA 523-9240

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3 THE HOLIDAY
4 NIGHT AT THE MUSEUM
5 THE CLEANER
6 CURSE OF THE GOLDEN FLOWER
7 DEJA VU
8 BLOOD DIAMOND
9 BABEL
10 ERAGON
11 ROB-B-HOOD
12 AGENT X44

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3 THE HOLIDAY
4 CURSE OF THE GOLDEN FLOWER

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3 CHARLOTTE'S WEB
4 BLOOD AND CHOCOLATE

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6 AGENT X44
7 CHARLOTTE'S WEB
8 THE HOLIDAY

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2 NIGHT AT THE MUSEUM
3 CHARLOTTE'S WEB
4 CURSE OF THE GOLDEN FLOWER
5 AGENT X44
6 SPIRIT TRAP

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2 THE MESSENGER
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4 NIGHT AT THE MUSEUM

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1 BLOOD AND CHOCOLATE
2 ARTHUR AND THE INVISIBLES
3 AGENT X44
4 FEAST

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2 THE MESSENGER
3 AGENT X44
4 CURSE OF THE GOLDEN FLOWER
5 CHARLOTTE'S WEB
6 ARTHUR AND THE INVISIBLES

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2 AGENT X44
3 ARTHUR AND THE INVISIBLES
4 TENACIOUS D

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4 BLOOD AND CHOCOLATE

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2 NIGHT AT THE MUSEUM
3 THE MESSENGER
4 CURSE OF THE GOLDEN FLOWER

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2 BABEL
3 ARTHUR AND THE INVISIBLES
4 THE HOLIDAY
5 ERAGON
6 BLOOD DIAMOND
7 AGENT X44
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2 RESERVED
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4 AGENT X44
5 NIGHT AT THE MUSEUM
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7 RESERVED
8 SPIRIT TRAP

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3 ZU WARRIORS
4 NIGHT AT THE MUSEUM

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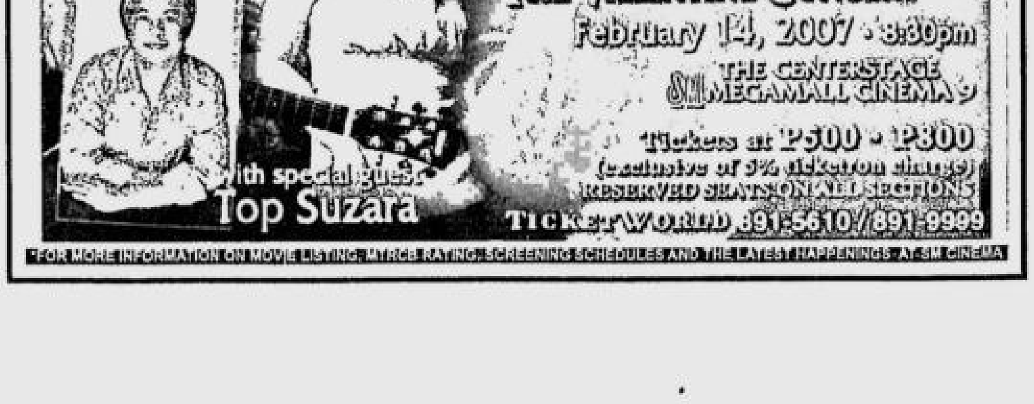

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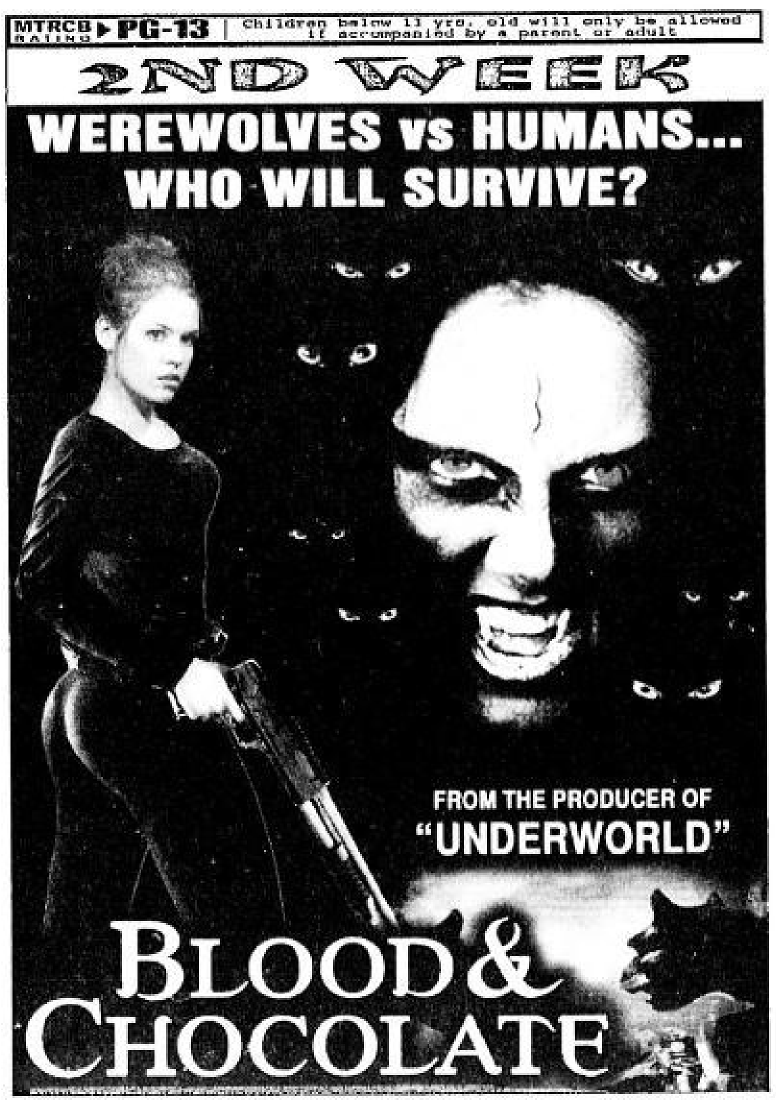
Ryan still hurts over split . . .

From page G1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2ND WEEK
WEREWOLVES vs HUMANS...
WHO WILL SURVIVE?
FROM THE PRODUCER OF
"UNDERWORLD"
BLOOD & CHOCOLATE

his new film "Breach," a dramatic thriller where he acts well opposite respected thespians **Chris Cooper** and **Laura Linney**.

Responding to a writer's question if it was fair to ask him about his pending divorce from the Oscar and Golden Globe winning actress, Ryan said, "It's fair to ask, man. I wouldn't divulge super personal stuff but I would say, you know, it's up and down. It's the most difficult time in my life. I realize what's at stake is my children's welfare and happiness so that's the priority right now."

Keep going

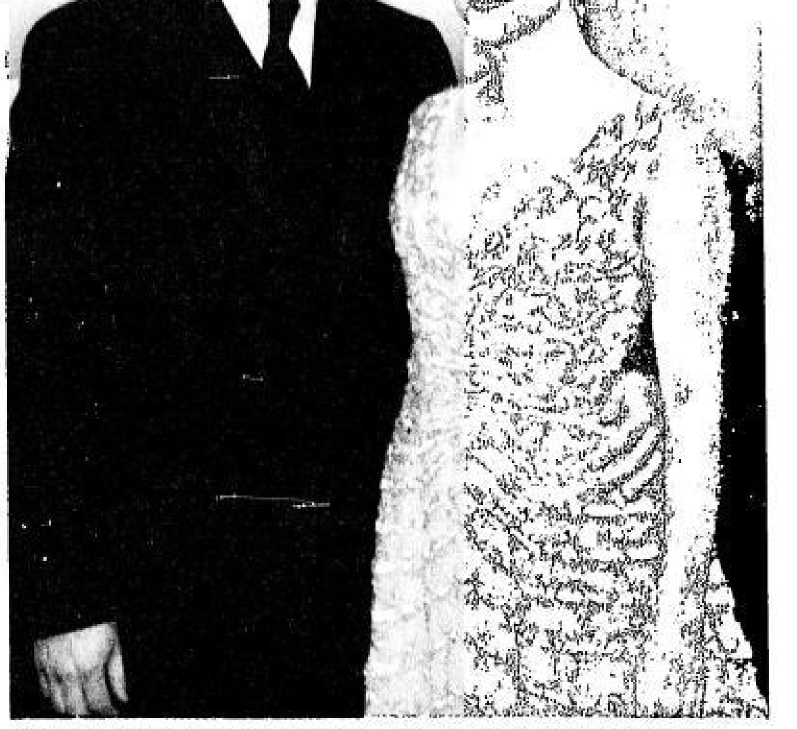
The actor added, "It's funny—here I am promoting a movie and people are saying, oh, his movie is great and his career is going well. It's the last thing on my mind right now. I love this movie. I love what I do ... You want to talk about working with a great actor like **Chris Cooper** and what I think of his performance, but it's difficult."

The 32-year-old father of **Ava**, 7, and **Deacon**, 3, his kids with Reese, continued, "What is on my mind right now is the heartache and my children but I'll persevere. People go through it, you know. I'm certainly not the first, won't be the last and that doesn't make it any easier. But there are reasons to keep on going, right?"

On whether the media was fair by identifying Australian actress, **Abbie Cornish**, as his alleged partner in a reported affair that infuriated Reese, the star of the Oscar-winning "Crash" and "Flags of our Fathers" stated, "Not (fair) at all but so much of what is done in the media is not fair to any of us and it's really beyond our control. You can waste a ton of energy trying to counteract it or whatever it is that made you feel slighted but you really have no control over it. You sign up for this life to some degree. If you don't want it, there are ways to get out. It's not the Mafia. If you're done with it and you're tired of it, move on. So things like that are unfair but it's just a part of this business."

Asked if an acting couple's relationship can be affected by competition (one of the reported reasons of his and Reese's estrangement), Ryan commented, "I can't speak for other people. I know that's not a part of who I am. I am not a competitive person and although I do have ambition and drive, there are many things far more important in life to me than movies. So I guess I don't really feel like that applies to my life. I mean, I imagine people would put that sort of pressure and focus on Reese and my relationship but I was always proud of her success."

He claimed, "You got to understand, I have no real aspirations to be a giant in this industry. I like making movies. I really do. And I want to tell cool stories and have people like my work but I don't have designs on making $25 million a picture. It's just not me and it's not really what I'm after. I just don't have that (competitive quality). That was the least of my problems."



ONLY LAST YEAR. Ryan and Reese at the 2006 Academy Awards.

There are reports that the couple has been civil to each other for their children's sake. Ryan and Reese, who have been married for seven years, were said to have been seen with Ava and Deacon at the former's school play. News items reported that in the divorce papers filed by Reese, she requested for joint legal custody of the kids but asked for primary physical custody and sought to prevent Ryan from seeking spousal support.

Intense scenes

Ironically, amid talks that Reese's hotter career fueled the couple's conflict, Ryan has several upcoming movies where he has important starring roles. In "Breach," a riveting film based on a true story that made headlines in 2001, he is likely to get good reviews as the young FBI agent, Eric O'Neill, who helped unmask FBI operative Robert Hanssen (**Chris Cooper**) as a double agent. Ryan has intense one-on-one scenes with the always-excellent Chris and acquits himself.

Ryan also pits talents with **Laura Linney** as his FBI boss who plants him as an assistant to uncover Chris' character's espionage activities for the former Soviet Union. Hanssen, thanks in large part to Eric's work, was found guilty of treason against the US in 2001. He is serving a life sentence at a maximum security prison for selling valuable classified documents to Russia, including the identification of KGB agents who worked as spy agents for the American government and the relocation plans for the US president in case of a major attack.

Ryan and Chris talked intensively with Eric, who was consulted in all aspects of the production to ensure authenticity. Writer/director **Billy Ray**, who helmed "Shattered Glass," the true story of The New Republic journalist **Stephen Glass**' fabrication and plagiarism, was a wise choice to bring another actual tale of deception to the big screen.

New accent

In "Stop-Loss," the actor portrays an Army sergeant who refuses to return to battle in Iraq despite the government ordering him to do so. It was reportedly on the set of this film that he had the rumored relationship with his costar, Abbie.

Ryan takes on a Dutch accent as an idealist intending to start a food charity in Morocco but is kidnapped by a terrorist (Laurence Fishburne) in "Five Fingers."

Another film, "Chaos," features him and **Jason Stratham** as cops chasing after an expert bank robber. Under a production he formed with his business partner, **David Siegel**, Ryan is set to produce the film adaptation of the novel "The White Boy Shuffle," which is described as a hip-hop "Catcher in the Rye."

Mood music

Last weekend, it was surreal to walk into the Kirk Douglas Theatre (right across from the Sony Pictures Studios) and hear **Sharon Cuneta**'s "Mr. DJ," **Kuh Ledesma**'s "Dito Ba" and **Anthony Castelo**'s "Balatkayo" being played before a performance of "Dogeaters" began. The songs were blared, as the predominantly white audience filed in, to set the mood for **Jessica Hagedorn**'s play about Manila when the Marcoses reigned.

E-mail the columnist at rvnepales_5585@yahoo.com.

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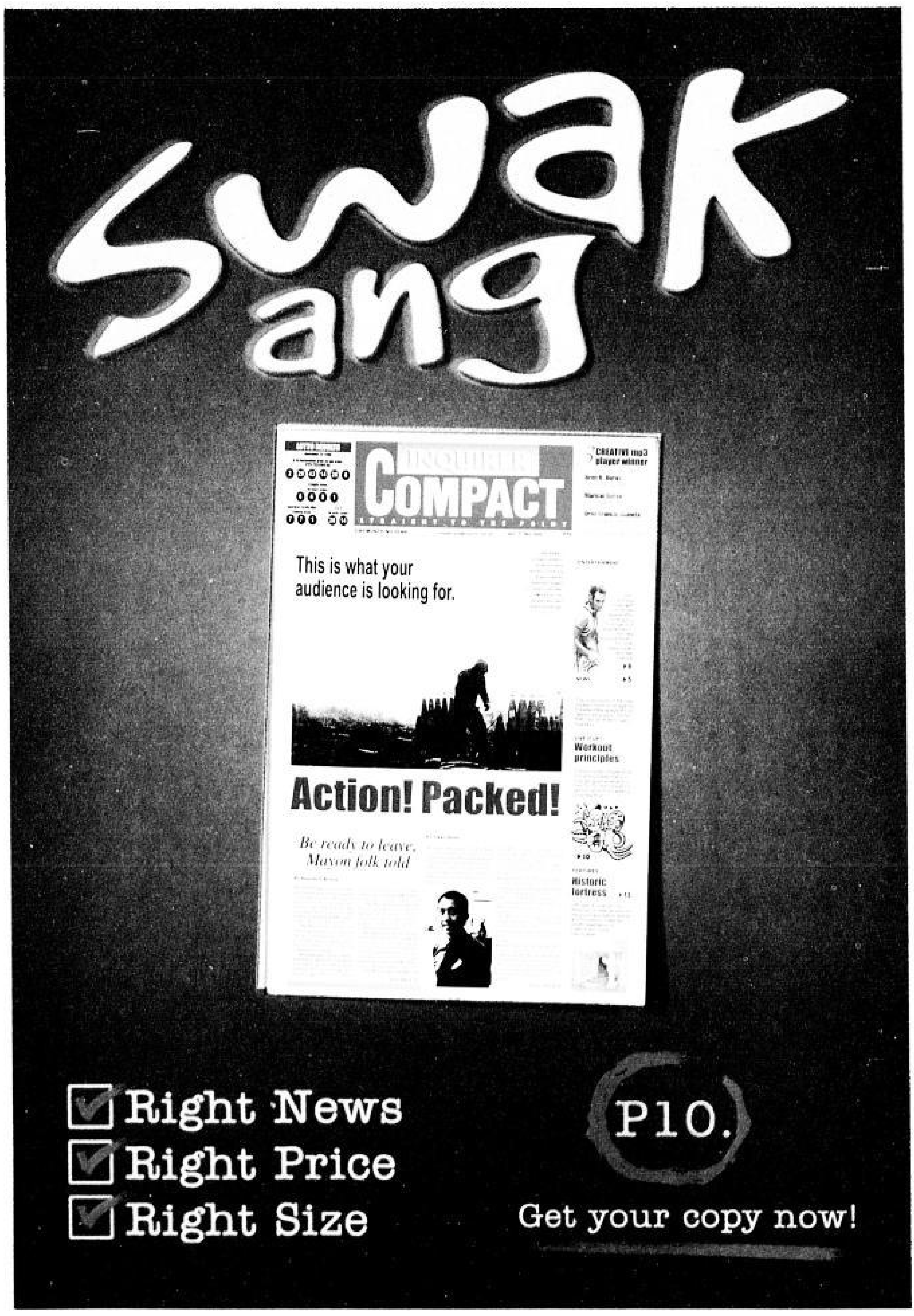
1	HANNIBAL RISING 2:45, 5:40, 8:25, 11:05 R-18	
2	THE HOLIDAY 2:20, 5:20, 8:20, 11:10 PG-13	
3	APOCALYPTO 2:20, 5:20 R-18	NIGHT AT THE MUSEUM 8:30, 11:00 G
4	CURSE OF THE GOLDEN FLOWER 12:55, 3:20, 5:55, 8:30, 11:00 PG-13	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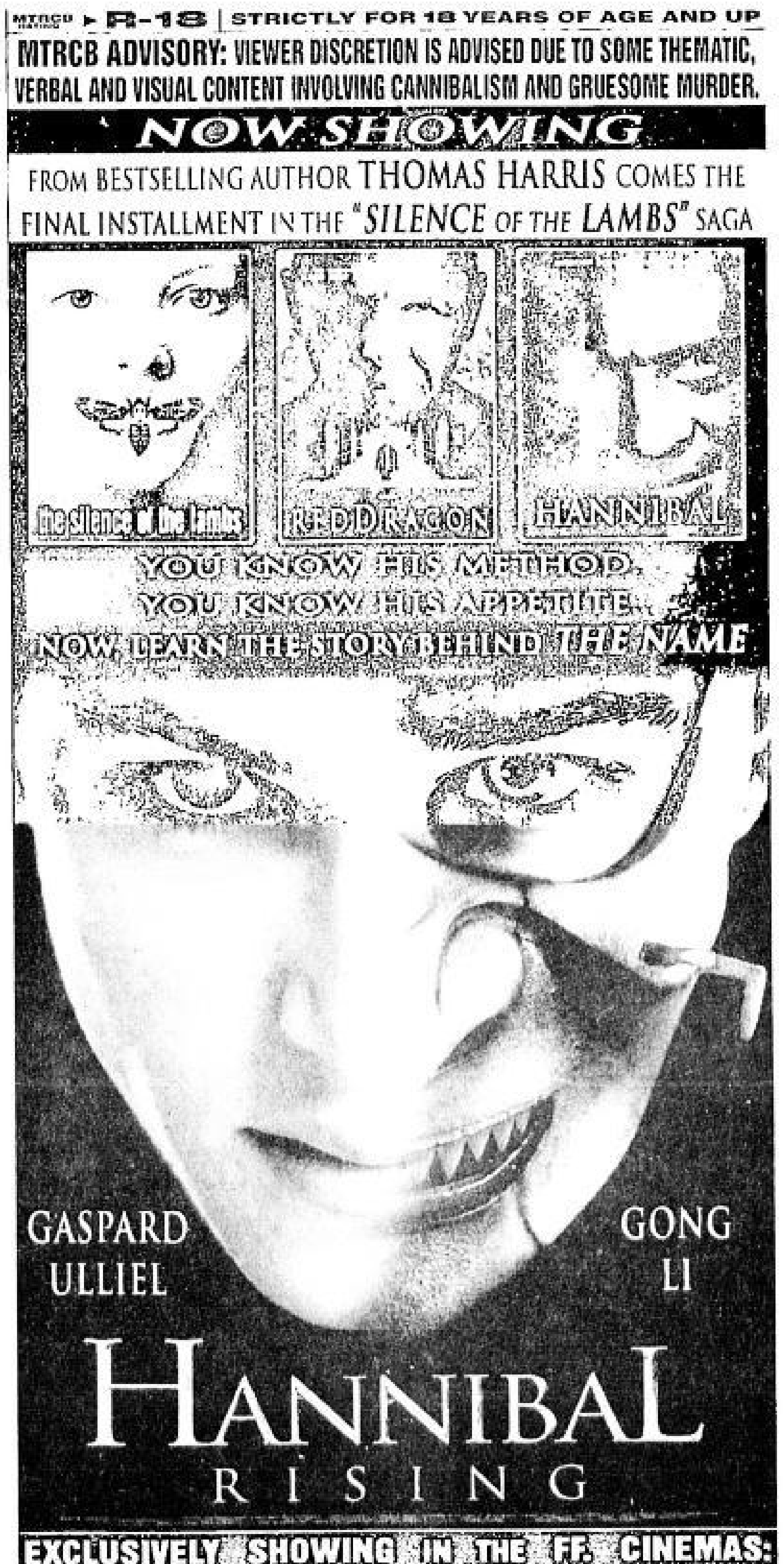
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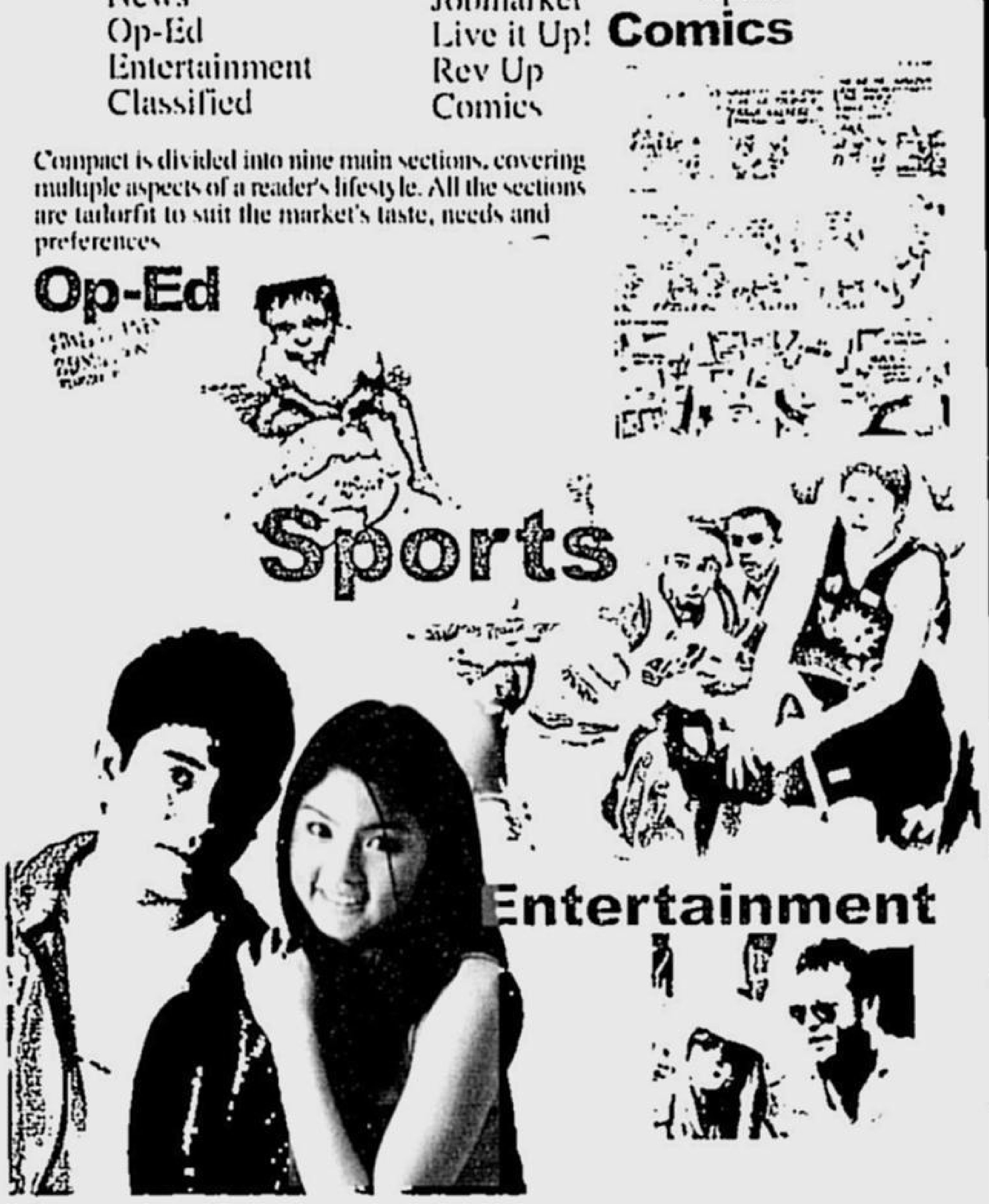

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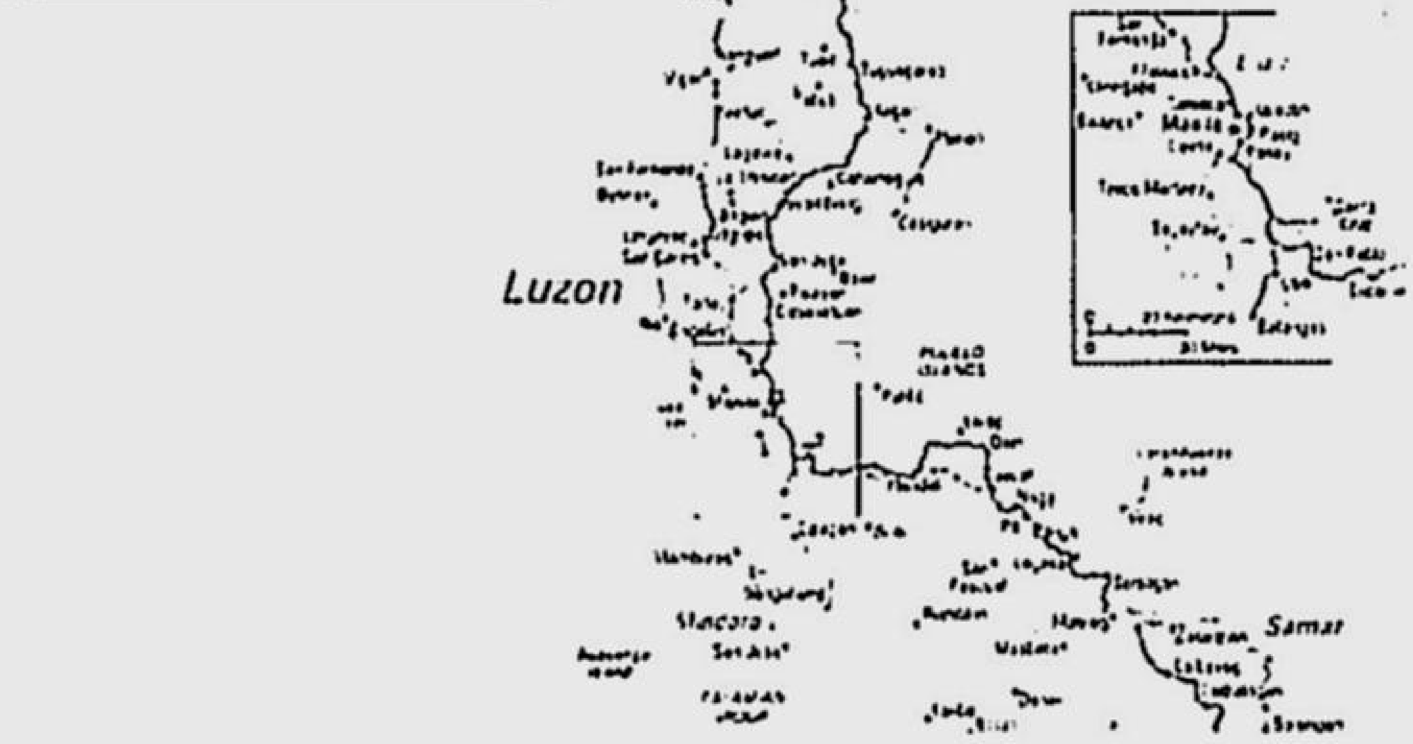

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ARA MINA

I have two pets: Tiffany, a five-year-old Pug, and Kiefer, a 10-month-old Bichon Frise. Along with Prada, Tiffany is a pup of my original pet Gucci. I named them after signature labels. Kiefer, who is named after my favorite Hollywood actor Kiefer Sutherland, is a birthday gift from (boyfriend) Polo Ravales. I buy special dog food for them—(Royal Canin) Hepatic for Tiffany and Science Diet for Kiefer. Since I am always busy, the vet drops by our house for their regular checkups.

Bayani San Diego Jr.
PHOTO BY AUGUST DE LA CRUZ

Paris taking Vienna by storm

DID YOU KNOW...

VIENNA, AUSTRIA—HOTEL heiress and celebutante Paris Hilton is on the guest list for next week's elegant Opera Ball, the society event of the season, and her impending visit is the talk of the town—for all the wrong reasons.

Hilton's swing through town for the lavish Feb. 15 ball—the hottest ticket in Vienna—comes just a few weeks after she pleaded no contest to alcohol-related reckless driving.

"This makes a farce of the Opera Ball," sniffed Barbara Kroth, a retired real estate agent who said she always looks forward to the annual affair at the 137-year-old State Opera House.

AP

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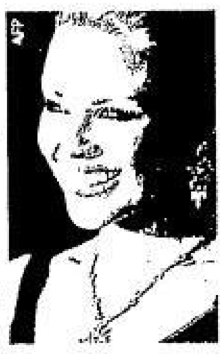
A BEJEWELED pink number at the exhibit.
AFP

Museum show in Kylie's honor


AFP
KYLIE MINOGUE

LONDON—ONE OF Britain's most venerable museums on Tuesday staged the first show it has ever dedicated to a pop star—Kylie Minogue.

The Australian pop diva's catsuits, corsets and other costumes from nine tours were draped across the halls of the Victoria and Albert Museum whose advance bookings record has been broken by the Kylie show.

Minogue, 38, said she rang her mother in Australia "and she was in tears."

In a statement at the entrance, Kylie pays tribute to her parents who followed her around on tour, collecting outfits from the dressing room after shows.

"Were it not for my parents ... this collection would be the size of a suitcase rather than an exhibition space."

Reuters

JOLINA MAGDANGAL

Between takes, when I'm working, I read "Diana: The Last Word" by Simone Simmons, the late princess' therapist. According to the book, the princess not just confided in Simone everything; she also gave the writer permission to come out with a book so that people would get to know the real Diana. I admired Diana because she was very gentle and kind. She also had lots of charity projects. When I was in London, I visited Harrod's to see Diana and Dodi Fayed's statue, called "Innocent Victims."

Bayani San Diego Jr.
PHOTO BY RUDY ESPERAS

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RED CARPET

The 59th Directors Guild of America Awards for film and TV last weekend in LA

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MARCIA GAY HARDEN REUTERS

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indieSine Featured FILM of the week

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at Robinsons Movieworld Galleria

Shielding his family from a looming misfortune, Virgilio delos Reyes keeps appearances through the aid of crystal methamphetamine. Virgilio and his wife receive Jay Juanillo as their tenant to escape the realities of his life from his wife and young male lover, settles in and builds relations with the delos Reyes family. From the seeming idyllic setting, Jay witnesses the slow implosion of the delos Reyes family and gets tangled in the power struggle within the compound. As Virgilio's paranoia escalates, Jay becomes an easy target, a scapegoat of Virgilio's inability to distinguish reality and hallucination. When their stategies of escape break down and reality catches up with them, the violence outside the gates find its way into the compound.

a WILL FREDO film
COMPOUND
KILALA MO SILA
MTRCB Rating: R18

SHANG CINEPLEX

① THE HOLIDAY
MTRCB PG-13
1:00, 4:00, 7:00, 10:00

② APOCALYPTO
1:00, 4:00 MTRCB R-18
NIGHT AT THE MUSEUM
7:25, 10:00 MTRCB GP

③ CURSE OF THE GOLDEN FLOWER
MTRCB R-13
2:15, 4:50, 7:25, 10:00

④ HANNIBAL RISING
MTRCB R-18

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MTRCB Rating: PG-13
Regular run begins Feb. 21 at Ayala Malls Cinemas

glorietta

MTRCB RATING ▶ PG-13

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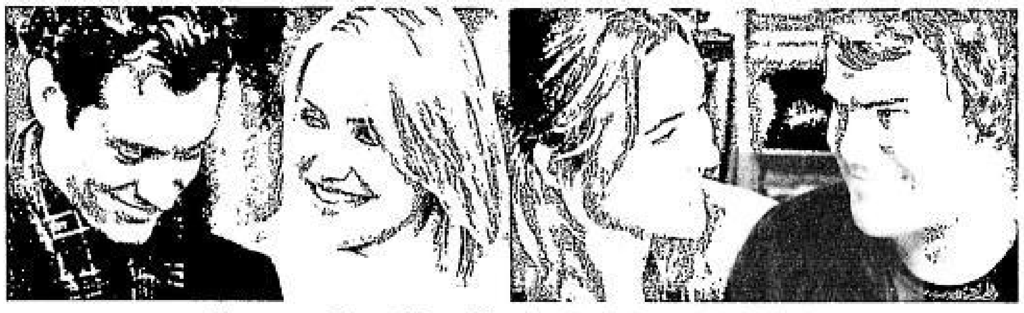


Cameron Diaz · Kate Winslet · Jude Law · Jack Black

a film by Nancy Meyers
the Holiday

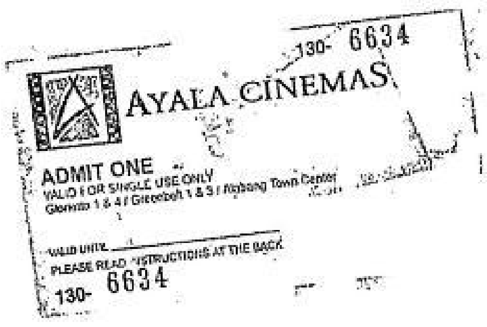
UNIVERSAL PICTURES AND COLUMBIA PICTURES PRESENT A WAVERLY FILMS PRODUCTION "THE HOLIDAY" ELI WALLACH EDWARD BURNS RUFUS SEWELL
MUSIC BY HANS ZIMMER COSTUME DESIGNER MARLENE STEWART EDITED BY JOE HUTSHING A.C.E. PRODUCTION DESIGNER JON HUTMAN DIRECTOR OF PHOTOGRAPHY DEAN CUNDEY ASC EXECUTIVE PRODUCER SUZANNE FARWELL
PRODUCED BY BRUCE A. BLOCK WRITTEN AND DIRECTED BY NANCY MEYERS

sony.com/TheHoliday

Release through Solar Entertainment Corporation

Ayala CINEMAS

Romance is in the air!



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glorietta GREENBELT TOWN MARKET! MARKET! AYALA CENTER

Ayala Malls Cinemas

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*See promo banners for more details

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First Prize:
- Movie and Dinner Date for two at Fish & Co.
- Total Rejuvenating Facial for two at Dermclinic
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Second Prize: Dinner Date for Two at Fish & Co.
Gift Pack from Dermclinic

Third Prize: Movie Date for Two
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CONSOLATION PRIZES:
FOR GREENBELT 1, GREENBELT 3, GLORIETTA 1, AND GLORIETTA 4
• 50 Holy Kettle Korn Popcorn • 50 Timezone Game Cards • 1 Gift Certificate from Ice Vodka Bar • 2 Gift packs from Dermclinic • 2 Gift Certificates from Fish & Co. • 5 Bench Fix Salon Gift Certificates

Promo Period: February 1-11, 2007
Deadline for submission of entries: February 11, 2007
Raffle Draw: February 12, 2007, 4:30pm with a DTI Representative
Per DTI Permit A1-070 Series of 2007

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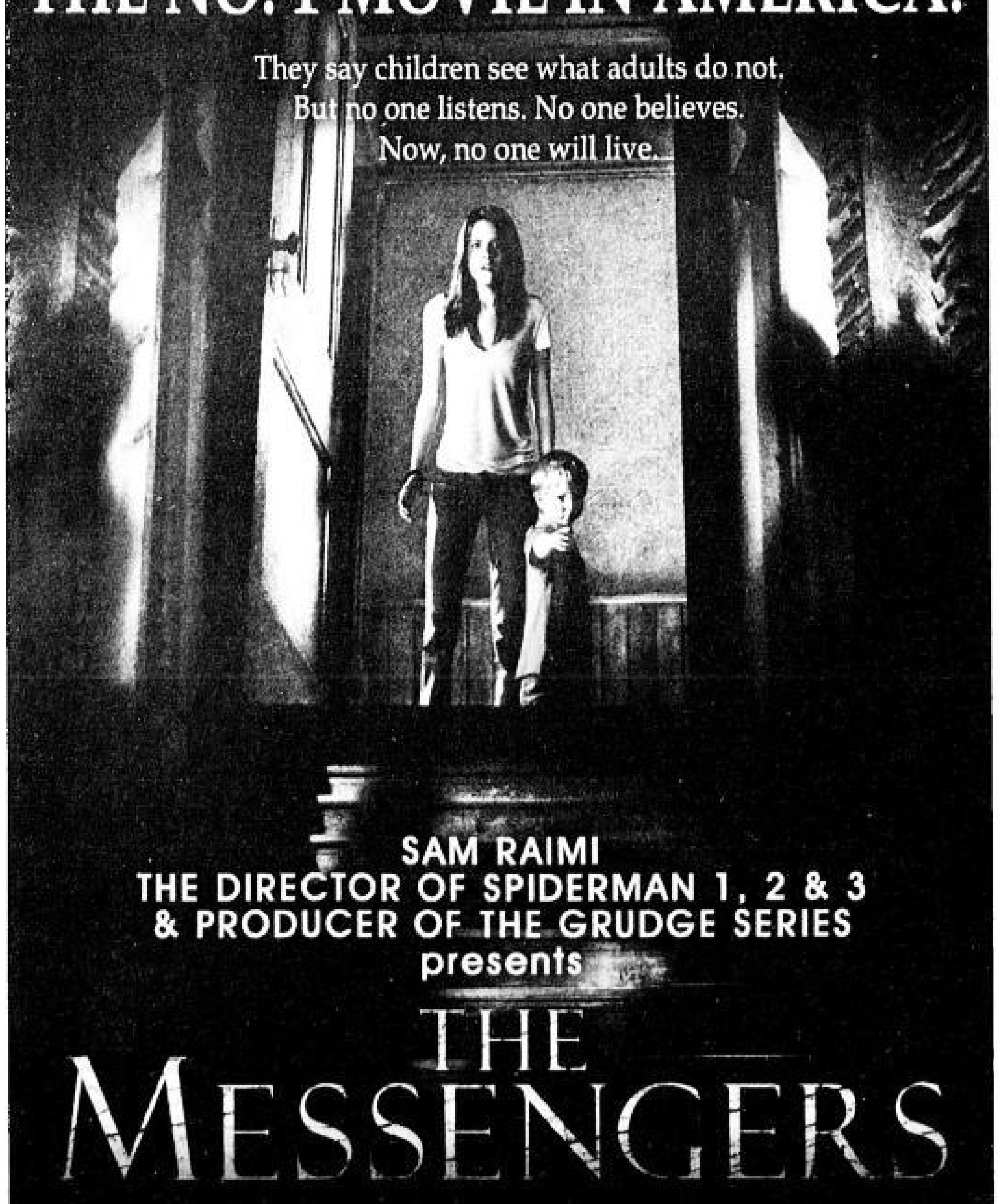

They say children see what adults do not.
But no one listens. No one believes.
Now, no one will live.

SAM RAIMI
THE DIRECTOR OF SPIDERMAN 1, 2 & 3
& PRODUCER OF THE GRUDGE SERIES
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THE MESSENGERS

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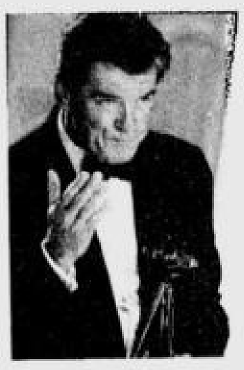
Winners at the Golden Kamera Awards in Berlin, Feb. 1



PIERCE Brosnan, for environmental commitment. REUTERS

KATIE Melua, Best International Solo Pop Artist REUTERS

LIONEL Richie, for lifetime achievement REUTERS

... and a stunning guest, actress Eva Mendes AFP

Marvel thrill ride begins FEB 14

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"TOO COOL"
"AWESOME"
"A THRILL RIDE"
NICOLAS CAGE
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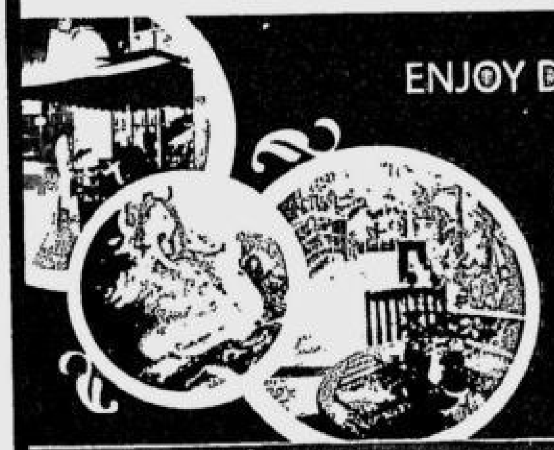

For reservations, call 911-5555 or log on to ticketnet.com.ph & aranetacenter.net

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THE HOLIDAY 1:20 / 4:10 / 7:00 / 9:50	HANNIBAL RISING 1:15 / 4:00 / 6:45 / 9:30	THE MESSENGERS 1:40 / 3:40 / 5:40 / 7:40 / 9:40	PLATINUM CINEMA
CURSE OF THE GOLDER FLOWER 2:05 / 4:35 / 7:05 / 9:35	BABEL 12:40 / 3:40 / 6:40 / 9:40	CODENAME: THE CLEANER 12:20 / 2:30 / 4:40 / 6:50 / 9:00	
NIGHT AT THE MUSEUM 1:50 / 4:30 / 7:10 / 9:50	APOCALYPTO 12:40 / 3:40 / 6:40 / 9:50	HOLLYWOODLAND 4:30 / 7:00 / 9:30 CHARLOTTE'S WEB 12:30 / 2:30	THE HOLIDAY 12:30 / 3:20 / 6:10 / 9:00

Araneta MALL 5

1 HANNIBAL RISING 12:35 / 3:20 / 6:05 / 8:50	2 THE MESSENGERS 12:40 / 2:40 / 4:40 / 6:40 / 8:40	3 APOCALYPTO 12:10 R4 / 2:10 / 5:10 / 8:10
4 AGENT X-44 12:20 / 2:20 / 4:20 / 6:20 / 8:20	5 CURSE OF THE GOLDER FLOWER 12:30 / 3:00 / 5:30 / 8:00	DOLBY DIGITAL dts SDDS

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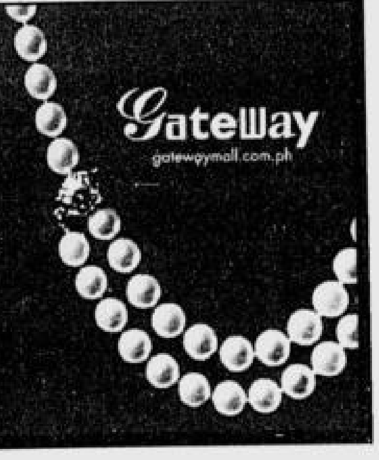

glorietta GREENBELT ALABANG TOWN AYALA CENTER CEBU MARKET! MARKET! Ayala Malls

AT THE CINEMAS THX

Reserve your tickets by texting SURESEATS GB3 or SURESEATS G4 to 2333 (Globe) or 211 (Smart) or log on to www.sureseats.com for web reservations
Movie schedules may change without prior notice For verification please call 729 7777

Cinema	Screen	Film
G1 GLORIETTA 1	1	THE CLEANER
	2	THE HOLIDAY
	3	HANNIBAL RISING
	4	CURSE OF THE GOLDEN FLOWER
G4 GLORIETTA 4	1	NIGHT AT HE MUSEUM
	2	THE MESSENGERS
	3 THX	HANNIBAL RISING GUARANTEED SEATS
	4	THE HISTORY BOYS
	5	CURSE OF THE GOLDEN FLOWER
	6	THE HOLIDAY
	7	APOCALYPTO
GB1 GREENBELT 1	1	APOCALYPTO
	2	THE HOLIDAY
GB3 GREENBELT 3	1 THX	THE MESSENGERS GUARANTEED SEATS
	2 THX	THE HOLIDAY GUARANTEED SEATS
	3	THE HISTORY BOYS GUARANTEED SEATS
	4	HANNIBAL RISING GUARANTEED SEATS
	5	NIGHT AT THE MUSEUM GUARANTEED SEATS
ATC ALABANG TOWN CENTER	1 THX	THE HOLIDAY GUARANTEED SEATS
	2	HANNIBAL RISING
	3	THE MESSENGERS
	4	CURSE OF THE GOLDEN FLOWER
	5	ARTHUR & THE INVISIBLES
ACC AYALA CENTER CEBU	1	THE HOLIDAY
	2	THE MESSENGERS
	3	APOCALYPTO
	4	GRIFFIN & PHOENIX
M2 MARKET! MARKET!	1	THE HOLIDAY
	2	CURSE OF THE GOLDEN FLOWER
	3	THE CLEANER
	4	HANNIBAL RISING
	5	THE MESSENGERS

At the Activity Center

Customer Service text hotline: 0917 6095900
Customer Service Numbers: Glorietta - 752 7272; from 10am to 9pm
Greenbelt - 757 4853; from 11am to 9pm
Alabang Town Center - 842 2782; from 10am to 8pm
Ayala Center Cebu - (032) 231 5342 loc 324
Market! Market! - 886 7519

GLORIETTA
Chinese New Year Celebration with Porky Pig
February 9, 2007

ALABANG TOWN CENTER
Celebrate the sweet life at the Town this Valentine's w/ MYMP Live!
February 10, 2007

AYALA CENTER CEBU
Philippine Arts Festival
February 10, 2007

MARKET! MARKET!
Chinese New Year Celebration with Porky Pig
February 10, 2007

GREENBELT
Greenbelt 5 Sneak Peak presents: Collection of Ana Rocha
February 7 to 18, 2007

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Repertory Philippines presents SONG & DANCE
at REP's Globe Theater - February 9 to March 4, 2007
For inquiries, pls. call 887-0710

Ayala MUSEUM
CHINESE DIASPORA: Art Streams from the Mainland (six shows)
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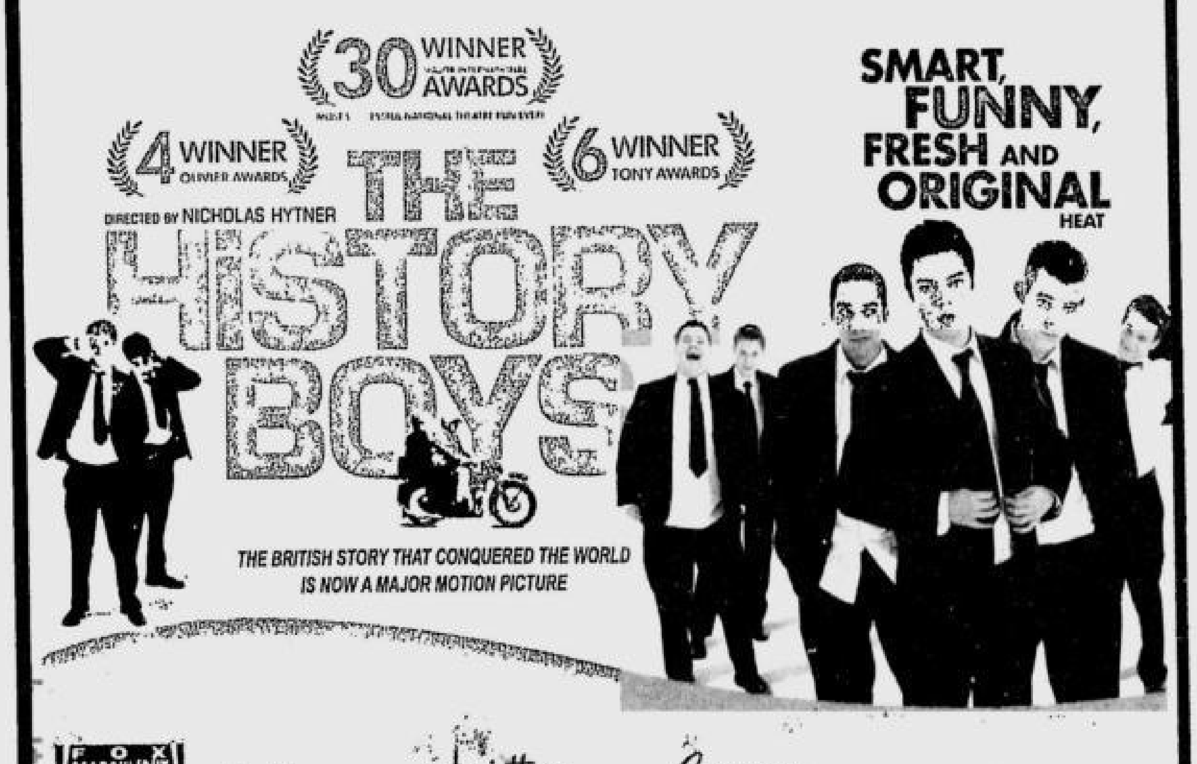

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4 WINNER OLIVIER AWARDS
6 WINNER TONY AWARDS
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Ayala Malls

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Feb. 11
With You...MYMP
Activity Center, 6pm

Bazaar! Bazaar!
Feb. 12-18
Valentine Bazaar! Bazaar!
Central Plaza

Feb. 10-18
Treats for Two Cinema Promo
For every 2 tickets purchased, get a chance to pick a prize

Feb. 20
The Philippine International Jazz and Arts Festival
Activity Center, 5pm to 9pm

MARKET! MARKET!

MMTA
METRO MANILA THEATERS ASSOCIATION
MOVIE GUIDE
NOW SHOWING

SHANG CINEPLEX
6th floor Shangri-La Plaza EDSA corner Shaw Boulevard Mandaluyong City
1 THE HOLIDAY
2 NIGHT AT THE MUSEUM
APOCALYPTO
CURSE OF THE GOLDEN FLOWER
4 HANNIBAL RISING
PREMIERE
THE MESSENGER

CINEMA 2000
Cinema 2000 Waltermart Makati
Waltermart Center, Chino Roces Ave. cor. Antonio Arnaiz Pio del Pilar, Makati City
Tel 816.4214 / 816.4216
1 THE HOLIDAY
CURSE OF THE GOLDEN FLOWER
3 APOCALYPTO
4 HANNIBAL RISING

Starmall
(Mandaluyong) tel. 7266150
3 HANNIBAL RISING
CURSE OF THE GOLDEN FLOWER
5 RESRVED

metropolis star cinema
www.clickthecity.com.ph
(ALABANG) tel. 8504285, 6433994
1 AGENT X 44
2 HANNIBAL RISING
CURSE OF THE GOLDEN FLOWER
4 APOCALYPTO

THEATRES
1 NIGHT AT THE MUSEUM
2 AGENT X 44
3 A GOOD YEAR

PACIFIC MALL LUCENA CINEMAGIC
Pacific Mall Lucena Tel (042) 660-5271
1 SAW - 3
BLOOD DIAMOND/DECK THE HALL
3 RESRVED
4 RESRVED

Filinvest FESTIVAL CINEMA
(Muntinlupa) tel 850.3571 or 72
1 CODNAME CLEANER
CURSE OF THE GOLDEN FLOWER
3 NIGHT AT THE MUSEUM
4 APOCALYPTO
5 THE HOLIDAY
6 THE MESSENGERS
7 HANNIBAL RISING
8 CHARLOTTE'S WEB
9 BLOOD CHOCOLATE
10 AGENT X 44

Blue Wave MARIKINA
Sumulong Highway cor. Mayor Gil Fernando Street, Sto. Nino, Marikina City tel. 9341927
CURSE OF THE GOLDEN FLOWER
2 NIGHT AT THE MUSEUM
3 APOCALYPTO
4 RESERVED

SUPER CINERAMA
Isetann Cinerama Complex Recto
tel 7334228
CURSE OF THE GOLDEN FLOWER
2 APOCALYPTO
3 THE MESSINGERS
4 CODENAME CLEANER
5 HANNIBAL RISING

THE MARKETPLACE
Mandaluyong
tel 533.3851 / 533.3856
1 TENACIOUS - D
2 ABNORMAL BEAUTY
3 JUNDARA
4 RESERVED

Masagana CINEMA
(Pasay) tel 833.3290 / 833.3274
1 AGENT X 44
CURSE OF THE GOLDEN FLOWER
3 HANNIBAL RISING

Center Mall Cinema
Baguio Center Mall, Magsaysay Avenue (Baguio City) tel (074)- (4449346)
1 SAW - 3
DECK THE HALLS/BLOOD DIAMOND

Jade Cinema
(Angeles City) tel (045) 887.5001 to 03
1 THE MESSINGERS
2 SPIRIT TRAP
3 CHARLOTTE'S WEB
CURSE OF THE GOLDEN FLOWER

Centre Plaza Cinema
(Balanga, Bataan) tel (047) 237.7007
1 BLOOD DIAMOND
2 HAPPY FEET

EASTWOOD CINEMAS
(Eastwood City Walk 2, Eastwood City E. Rodriguez Jr. Ave (C-5) Quezon City) tel 687.6963 or 72
1 HANNIBAL RISING
2 THE HOLIDAY
3 APOCALYPTO
NIGHT AT THE MUSEUM
CURSE OF THE GOLDEN FLOWER

CINEMA 2000
Movie Theatres of the New Millenium

Cinema 2000 Waltermart
(Calamba) tel (049) 545.7383
1 AGENT X 44
2 NIGHT AT THE MUSEUM
CURSE OF THE GOLDEN FLOWER
4

Cinema 2000 Pavilion Mall
(Binan) tel. (049) 4111146
1 RESERVED
2 RESERVED
3 RESERVED
4 RESERVED

Cinema 2000 Cinemagix
(Urdaneta) tel(075) 568.6771
1 ROB-B-HOOD
2 AGENT X 44
3 SAW - 3

Cinema 2000 Metrotown
(Tarlac) tel (045) 982 1729
1 LITTLE CHILDREN
2 AGENT X 44
3 SPIRIT TRAP
4 BLOOD DIAMOND

Cinema 2000 Waltermart
(Plaridel) tel (044) 795.3320
1 NIGHT AT THE MUSEUM/A GOOD YEAR
2 AGENT X 44
3 LITTLE CHILDREN

Cinema 2000 Waltermart
(Gapan) tel. (044) 4867736
1 BLOOD DIAMOND
2 ROB-B-HOOD

Lianas Cinema
(Pasig) tel 640.4748
1 BLOOD DIAMOND
2 AGENT X 44

Lianas Cinema
(Alabang) tel 850.1276
1 CODENAME CLEANER
2 TAGINIT
3 BALAHIBONG PUSA
4 SAW-3

Lianas MovieCity
(Calamba) tel (049) 545.7202
1 TENACIOUS - D
2 MAPANUKSO
3 THE RETURN
4 KALABIT
CURSE OF THE GOLDEN FLOWER

Fiesta World Mall
(Lipa) tel (043) 981.0790
1 CHECK IN
2 BLOOD CHOCOLATE
3 ARTHURE & THE INVISIBLE
4 TENACIOUS - D

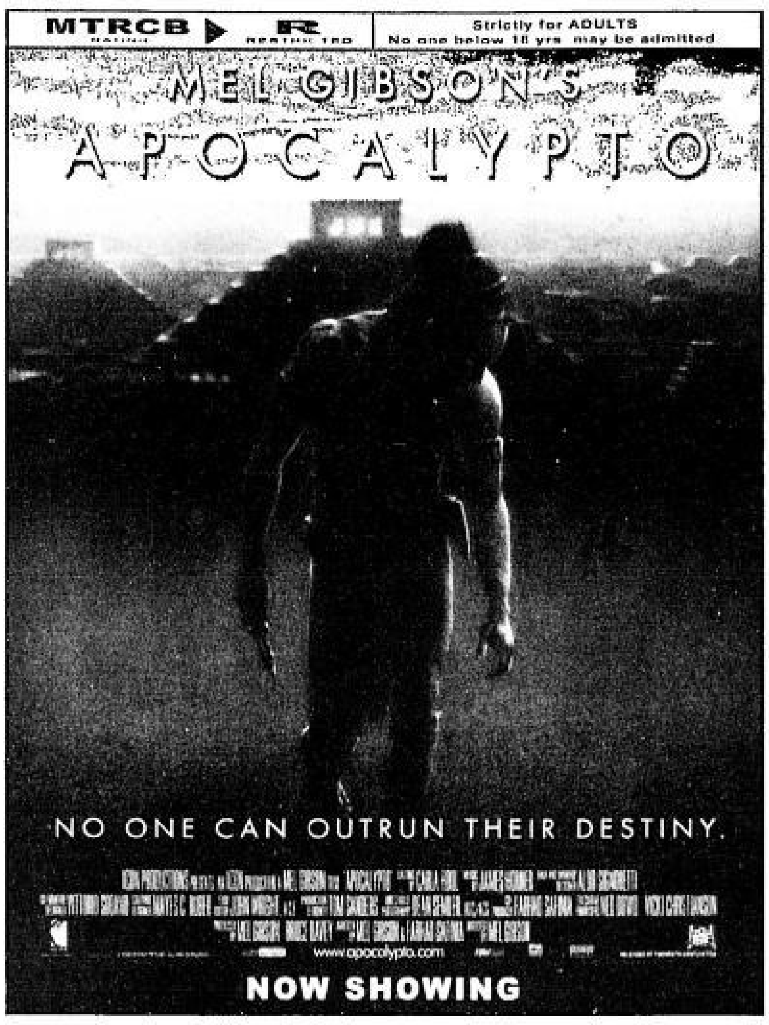
Berma Cinema
(Baclaran) tel 879.2030 / 879.2029
1 SAW-3
2 SYA AY NAGDADALAGA

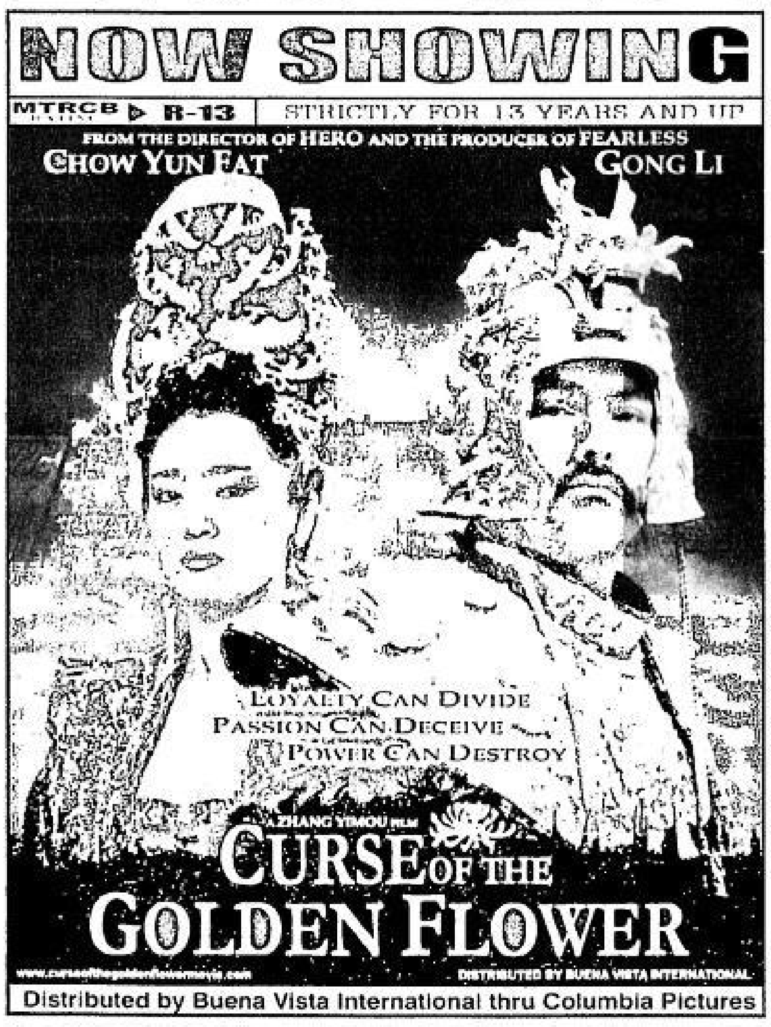
MOVIES / SCHEDULES / PRICES SUBJECT TO CHANGE WITHOUT PRIOR NOTICE

POWER PLANT CINEMA
Rockwell Center, Makati City ☎ Tel. No: 8981440-41
DOLBY DIGITAL SURROUND•EX

THE MESSENGERS PG13 2:30,4:30,6:30, 8:30,10:30	CODE NAME: THE CLEANER PG13 2:00,4:00,6:00, 8:00,10:00	CURSE OF THE GOLDEN FLOWER R13 12:30,3:00,5:30, 8:00,10:30
CHARLOTTE'S WEB G 5:10 APOCALYPTO R18 7:30,10:20	HANNIBAL RISING R18 2:50,5:20,7:50,10:20	THE HOLIDAY PG13 1:55,4:45,7:35,10:25

MOVIES AND SCREENING SCHEDULES SUBJECT TO CHANGE WITHOUT PRIOR NOTICE · FOR VERIFICATION CALL 898-1440/41
MATINNEE 110.00 FREE SEATING SCREENING BEFORE 5:00P.M. – MONDAY-FRIDAY


MTRCB RATING R RESTRICTED Strictly for ADULTS No one below 18 yrs may be admitted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OPENS FEBRUARY 14!
HE STILL HAS THE MOVES... AND THE PANTS...
ALL HE NEEDS IS HER.
hughgrant
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THE FAMOUS and very wealthy have been snatching up homes like this one on Paradise Island in the Bahamas. AP

A magnet for celebs

NASSAU, BAHAMAS—ACTOR JOHNNY Depp bought a rugged private island ringed with white sand off Exuma. Musician Lenny Kravitz snapped up a speck of land in the Eleuthera chain. Sean Connery is ensconced behind high walls on the western tip of New Providence.

The Bahamas, an archipelago of 700 islands strewn across the western Atlantic Ocean, is drawing celebrities seeking sun and a culture that discourages celebrity worship, allowing them to largely avoid autograph seekers while remaining within easy reach of the United States.

Friendly tax laws

"People are happy to meet you, but they don't want to exploit you or want anything from you," actor Nicolas Cage, who owns a home near the capital, Nassau, and an island off Exuma, told The Associated Press. "It's nice to be able to ... take a walk on the beach and not have to worry about having your picture taken."

Offering favorable tax and residency laws, the government of the former British colony is encouraging the wealthy to come and take a look.

Any foreigner who purchases a home worth at least $500,000 can become eligible for permanent residency—an incentive for jet-setters seeking to come and go with minimum hassle. Another inducement is that the Bahamas has no tax on income, capital gains or inheritances.

NICHOLAS Cage and son Kal-el watch a December street festival in Nassau. AP

Other stars who own Bahamas getaways include Shakira, Michael Jordan, John Travolta, David Copperfield, Faith Hill and Tim McGraw, Sean "Diddy" Combs and former tennis great Jim Courier.

The interest of celebrities has boosted already high real estate prices in a country where home prices are largely out of reach of locals and has prompted fears of overdevelopment.

Sometimes a bane

The publicity that comes with being home to the famous can sometimes be a negative—as Bahamians learned last year when reality star and former Playboy playmate Anna Nicole Smith took up residence in Nassau.

Smith says she came to seek privacy during her pregnancy, but the death of her 20-year-old son under mysterious circumstances at her hospital bedside sparked a political scandal and brought negative publicity.

Most celebrities, however, lead quiet lives here.

Discovery

Depp discovered the idyllic islands while filming parts of "Pirates of the Caribbean" trilogy on the island chain. In 2004, he bought Little Hall's Pond Cay, a deserted 36-acre spit of land with six beaches, listed at $3.5 million.

Kravitz, who has Bahamian roots, was a frequent visitor before he bought his own tiny island in the Eleuthera chain known for its barrier reefs and slow pace of development.

Connery, a longtime resident, lives in a single-story home overlooking a golf course. AP

JOHNNY DEPP REUTERS

MICHAEL JORDAN AP

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CINEMA 1 THE MESSENGER 11:15 , 1:35 , 3:50 6:05 , 8:20 , 10:35 PG-13
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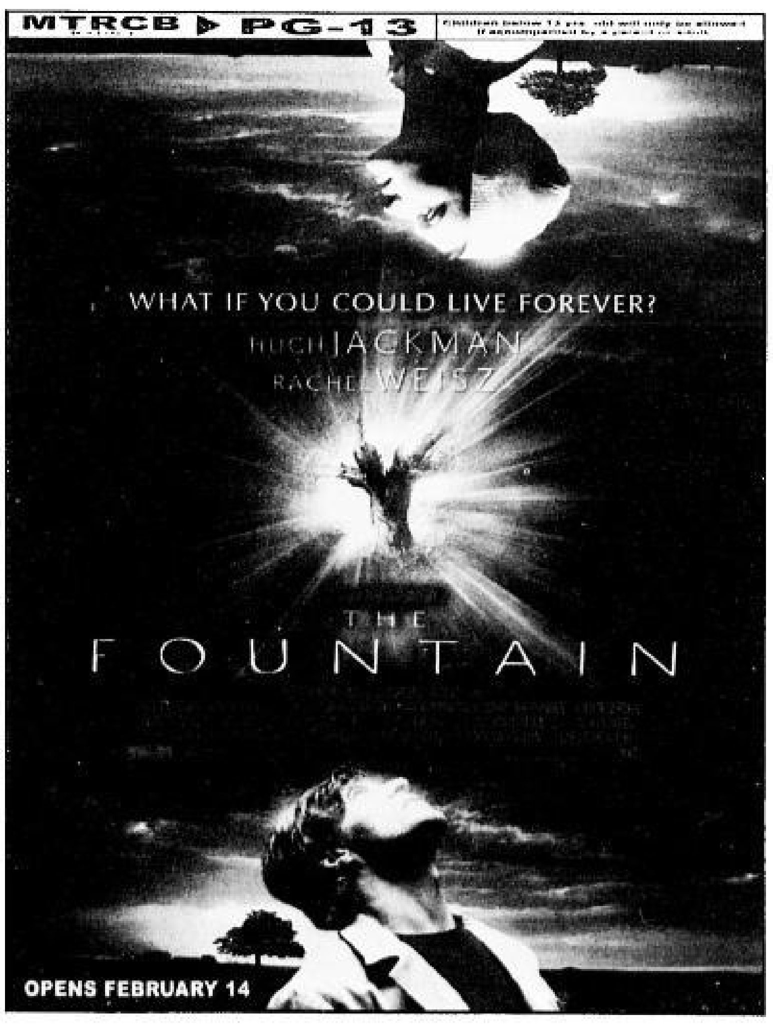
CINEMA 3 CURSE OF THE GOLDEN FLOWER 11:15 , 2:00 , 4:40 7:20 , 10:00 R-13
CINEMA 4 HANNIBAL RISING 11:30 , 2:15 , 5:00 7:45 , 10:30 R-18
CINEMA 5 THE HOLIDAY 10:40 , 1:35 , 4:30 7:25 , 10:20 PG-13
TICKET PRICES & SCREENING TIME SUBJECT TO CHANGE WITHOUT PRIOR NOTICE. FOR CINEMA INQUIRIES, CALL: 722 4496.

MUSIC MUSEUM	Feb. 7 & 8 , 2007	Agot Isidro "Back to Basics"	8:30 PM
	Feb. 09 , 2007	BIMBO CERRUDO " TONIGHT MY LOVE"	8:30 PM
	Feb 13 & 14 , 2007	OGIE ALCASID AND AI - AI	8:00 PM
	Feb. 16 & 17 , 2007	Passion Y Fuego	8:00 PM
TEATRINO PROMENADE GREENHILLS	EVERY MONDAY	DANCE NIGHT	7:00 PM
	Feb. 06 & 20 , 2007	DYORDS KO PO	8:30 PM
	February 11 , 2007	LOVI POE "A BIRTHDAY CELEBRATION"	9:00 PM
	Feb. 13 & 14 , 2007	RAYMUND LAUCHENGCO	8:30 PM

FOR INQUIRIES & RESERVATION, PLS. CALL : 721-6726 OR 721-0635


MTRCB RATING PG-13

CHICOSCI, left; Kamikaze's Jay Contreras and Parokya's Chito Miranda onstage.

PHOTOS BY RYAN LIM

Friends sing for Ely Buendia

By Pocholo Concepcion
Contributor

ELY Buendia, with a rare smile on his lips in this file photo. RODEL ROTONI

WEEKS BEFORE SUFfering a heart attack, Ely Buendia was said to be "depressed."

The 35-year-old former leader of the country's biggest and most influential band reportedly felt so isolated, he blurted out one night after a gig with his new group Pupil at Eastwood City in Libis, Quezon City: "Where have all my friends gone?"

Eastwood City would be the same venue of "LivEly"—a hastily prepared concert held Jan. 28 to help Ely defray hospital bills and other medical expenses.

The organizers included former Eraserheads road manager Julie Pacanas, Shirley Asignacion-Elgar (Buendia's ex, now married to Rivermaya guitarist Mike Elgar), '70s Bistro manager Renard Bartolome, MTV Philippines PR officer Lizette Claudio, DJs of FM radio station DWTM 89.9 and others who came together as concerned friends volunteering their services.

The motley lineup consisted of Chicosci, Ciudad, Dicta License, FrancisM, Itchyworms, Join the Club, Julianne, Kamikazee, Kitchie Nadal, Makatha, Moonstar 88, Oppressed, Paramita, Parokya ni Edgar, Rivermaya, Rocksteddy, Salindiwa, Sponge Cola, Swissy, True Faith and Up Dharma Down.

Former E-heads lead guitarist Marcus Adoro made a surprise appearance as the last performer.

The bands played three songs each and then went down the stage to approach the Sunday crowd with donation boxes.

Some P70,000 was raised, with the the artists themselves pledging more.

Backstage, the vibe was relaxed. "*Walang* rock 'star'," Bartolome observed. "Everybody is waiting patiently for their turn to play."

A few talked about their relationship with Buendia and the E-heads.

"To me he is a *kuya*," Itchyworms vocalist-guitarist Jugs Jugueta said. "Not only did the Eraserheads influence my band's music; they even helped us record our first demo in Ely's home studio. The E-heads also got us to open their gigs."

"We were pretty close in the 1990s and hung out a lot," True Faith front man Medwyn Marfil recounted. "I know Ely's brothers and sisters because I lived in Parañaque which was near their place in Las Piñas. But mainly I was a big fan, even when I was already with True Faith. I'm the type who would profess love for music that I admire. Ely's music was tops, very artistic."

ABS-CBN's Ricky Lee and Joyce Bernal were roaming around, coordinating with volunteers distributing the collection boxes.

"*Estudyante ko si* Ely *noong nagtuturo pa ko sa* UP," Lee expplained. "*Nakasama ko siya ... sa grupong* Cineastes. *Hindi pa malaman ni* Ely *noon kung ano talaga ang gusto niyang gawin sa dami ng* talent *niya. Kinuha ko siyang* assistant, *taga*-research, *kasama sa* workshops *ko sa bahay.* I remember *gusto niyang iparinig sa amin yung* demo songs *niya ... wala pang pumapansin. Pero alam ko malalim siyang tao at seryoso. Kahit nga naglalaro yan ng* video game, *sobrang seryoso.*"

According to FrancisM, Buendia was playing Tekken, an exciting computer game, when he first felt chest pains while on the road to a Pupil gig in Laguna.

However, friends believe the heart attack was the result of a buildup of stress from more serious physical and emotional factors.

What could have caused that outburst in Eastwood?

One theory involves an incident where Diane Ventura, Ely's live-in partner and one of two managers, allegedly doused water on the owner of Big Sky Mind, an art gallery-music joint in Quezon City, which led to the banning of Pupil from the establishment.

At the fundraiser, some of the participating bands were said to have made one request: that Ventura should not show up.

Also, it looks like Buendia still has to mend some fences, especially with his former band mates. There was talk that E-heads drummer, now Sandwich front man, Raimund Marasigan is still smarting from the way Buendia broke up the band via text message. Marasigan didn't bother replying to the invitation to play at "LivEly.".

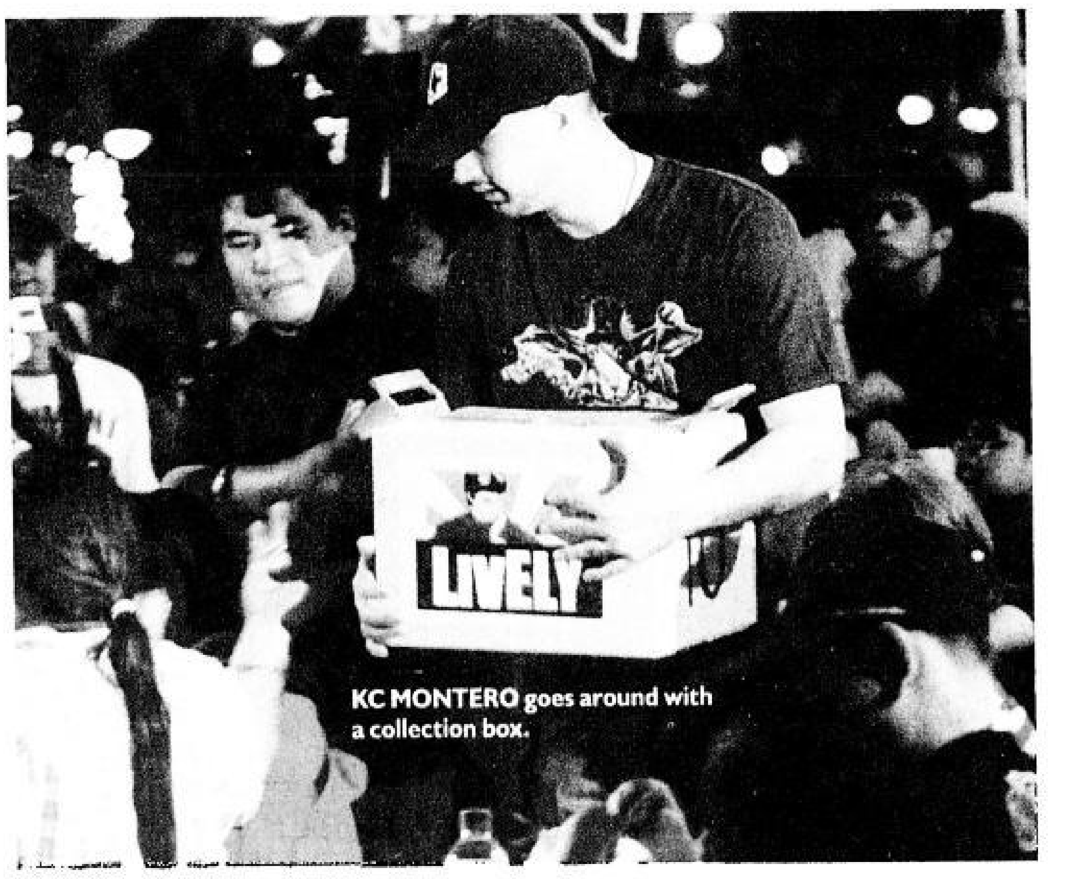
Oh well, as the Stones loved to say, "It's only rock 'n' roll…"

FrancisM is holding his own fundraiser for Ely on Feb. 24 at Zirkoh, Timog, Quezon City featuring various artists. Meanwhile, Ely himself is slated to perform Feb. 23 at Star Mall in Las Piñas to raise funds—for a school!

KITCHIE Nadal does her share, with gusto.

FORMER E-heads guitarist Marcus Adoro concludes the program.

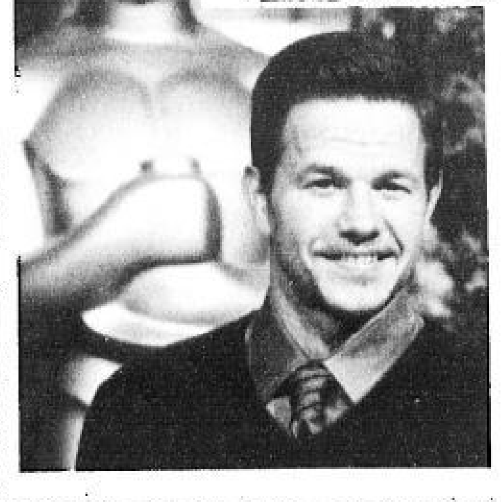
FILM director Joyce Bernal and scriptwriter Ricky Lee, Ely's fellow movie enthusiasts.



KC MONTERO goes around with a collection box.

PARTY! PARTY!

LEONARDO DiCaprio, right, and Mark Wahlberg, below.



RINKO KIKUCHI AP

JENNIFER HUDSON AP

HELEN MIRREN AP

ABIGAIL BRESLIN AP

CLINT EASTWOOD AP

Oscar nominees meet for lunch

BEVERLY HILLS, CALIFORNIA—A CONSTELLATION of Oscar-nominated stars gathered Monday for an informal get-together ahead of the biggest cinematic awards show in the world later this month.

From eight-time Oscar nominated 74-year-old Peter O'Toole to 10-year-old first-timer Abigail Breslin, around 143 nominees were on hand for the annual nominees luncheon at a luxury Beverly Hills hotel.

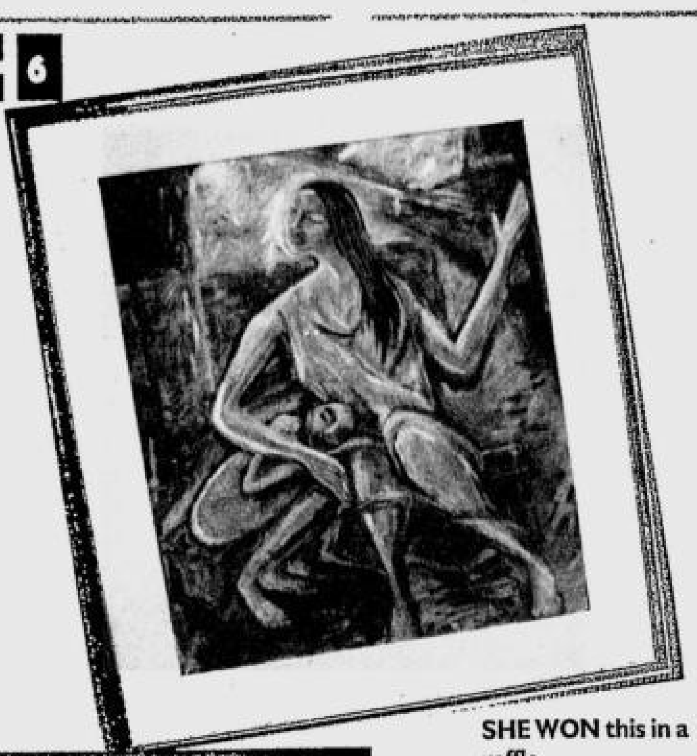
Organizers issued a friendly exhortation to Hollywood's assembled great to keep their acceptance speeches at the Feb. 25 extravaganza short, sweet—and not boring.

"The success of the show depends on you," said telecast producer Laura Ziskin.

Sid Ganis, the president of the Academy of Motion Picture Arts and Sciences, pointed out, "There's no top table, no bottom table [today]."

The luncheon's format saw legendary figures like Steven Spielberg, Clint Eastwood and O'Toole rubbing elbows with unsung Hollywood denizens—from make-up artists to sound mixers to special effects.

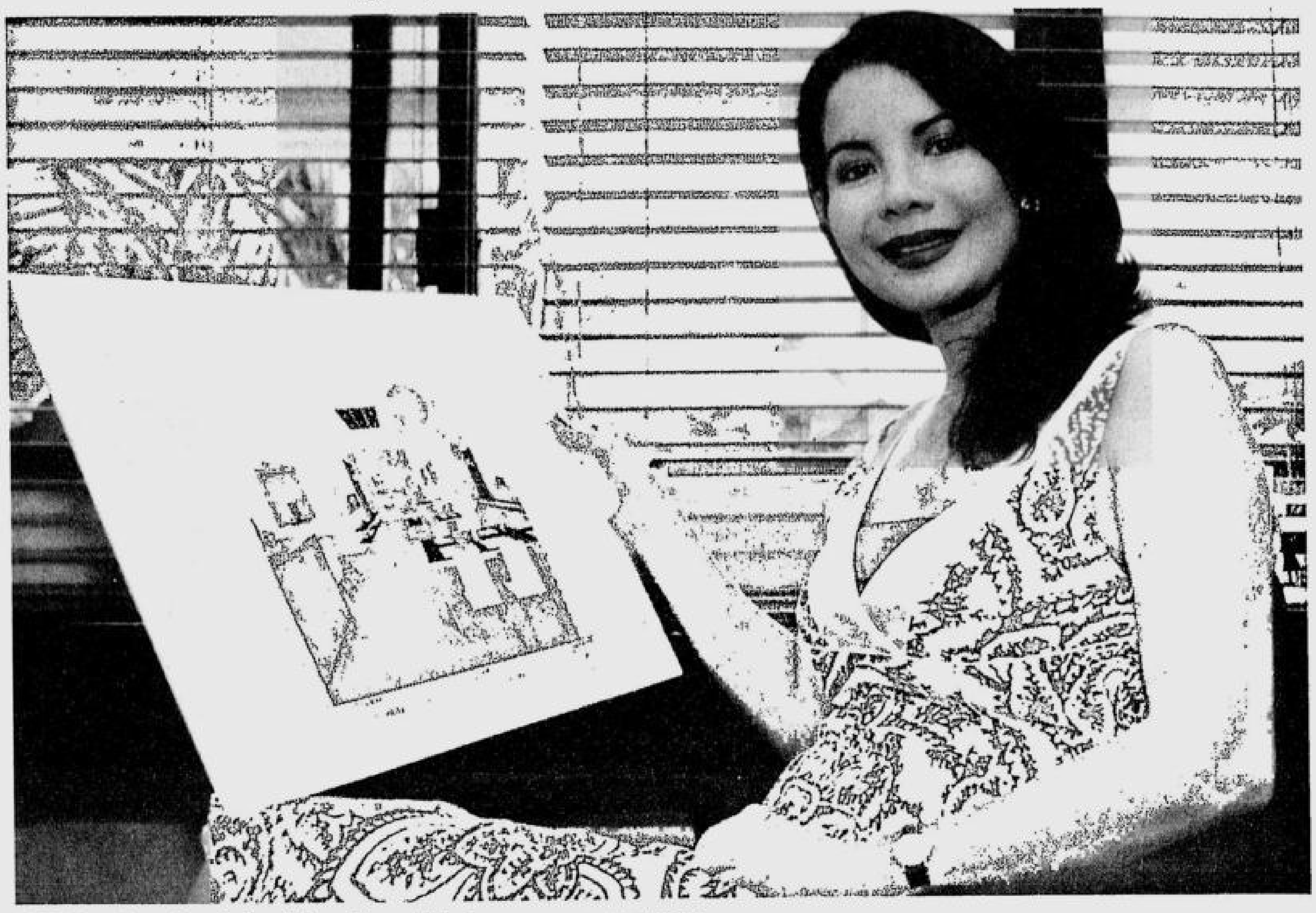
Best actor nominee Will Smith summed up the mood of the event, saying it was the highlight of the Oscars experience. *AFP*



SHE WON this in a raffle

FLOWERS, by Malang

The actress, who is also a home stylist, lives in a virtual art gallery



CARMI works on her designs in her office, which also serves as a guest room.

Carmi Martin, *designing woman*

By Bayani San Diego Jr.
Photos by Ryan Lim

HOME BODY

HER HOME TELLS A STORY of inspiration, says actress-interior designer Carmi Martin.

She has been living here since 1988, though she had to leave it for three years till 2003 while she was enrolled at the Philippine School of Interior Design.

Show biz had gone into a slump at the time. "I had no steady income from acting," she recalls. "I decided to rent out this place and move to a smaller one near the school."

In fact, she was reinventing herself, pursuing a long-cherished dream.

"My good friend (actress-comedian) Tessie Tomas encouraged me to take up design. Whenever I threw parties at home, my guests always complimented the interiors," she recounts.

"Minimalist" is how she describes her personal style.

"I hate loud colors. I'm also partial to indigenous materials, like abaca," she explains.

Adorned with paintings, her home looks like a mini-art gallery.

There are a series of still lifes by Mauro "Malang" Santos and abstracts by Gerry Ingco.

In the living room is a gift from artist Ivan Acuña. In the foyer is a "Mother and Child" piece that she had won in a CBN Asia raffle.

In the upstairs hallway is Carmi's life-size portrait by Isabel Diaz. "I've always admired her because her works are cool and casual," Carmi notes.

She says she advises clients to "invest" in art by renowned painters: "Paintings add a burst of colors to the house, and appreciate in value."

She is busier as interior designer than as actress these days. She's currently in the cast of the new GMA 7 series "Magic Kamison," but she has four design projects ongoing.

"I am working on a resort (Canyon Ranch in Cavite). Neighbors asked me to do modern and Mediterranean designs for their apartments. A client in Manila wanted a contemporary style for a condo unit," she says. "I can adjust to suit my clients' personalities and preferences."

For sexy actress Rufa Mae Quinto's den and dressing room, for instance, Carmi whipped up a pop art and "Hollywood" look. (Her designs are posted on her Web site, www.martininteriorsph.com.)

"More than the money," she says, beaming, "the best reward is when clients thank me for beautifying their homes."

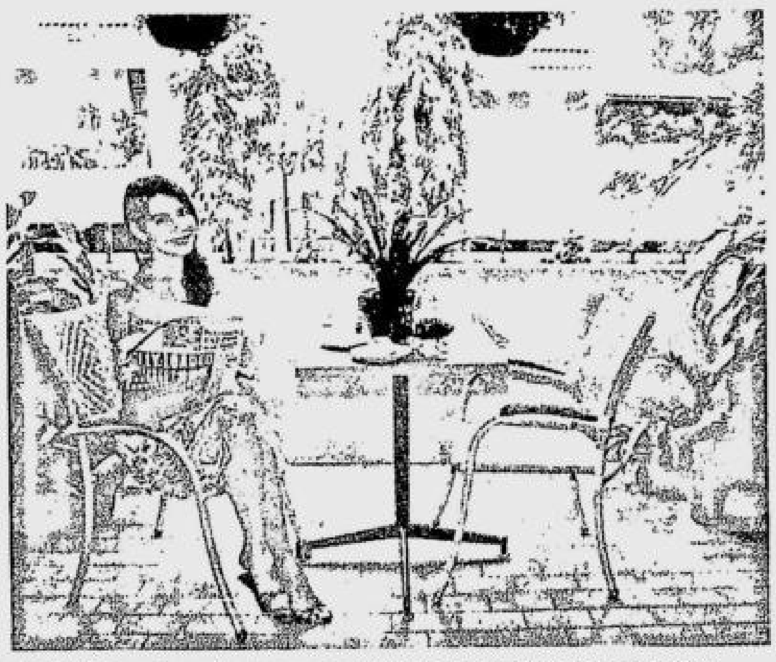
But Carmi's dream project is to work on a resort abroad that will feature Philippine materials and murals and frescoes by Pinoys—"a great way to promote the country."

DOUBLE TAKE: In front of her portrait by Isabel Diaz, circa 1988.

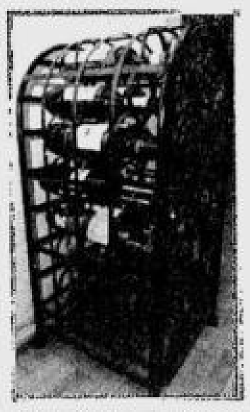
EARTH colors, drawn from indigenous materials like abaca, dominate the living room.

IN HER office hangs a portrait, circa 1982.

SHE FOUND this piece of sculpture in a department store.



COFFEE break on the terrace, surrounded by blooms and greens.



WROUGHT-iron wine rack

BRIDS of paradise from Dangwa

ROSE centerpiece is by her cousin Phillip

THE BEDROOM is a sanctuary for the busy actress-designer. HR Ocampo and Gerry Ingco paintings hang in the room.

ESCRITOIRE from an antique shop in Malate

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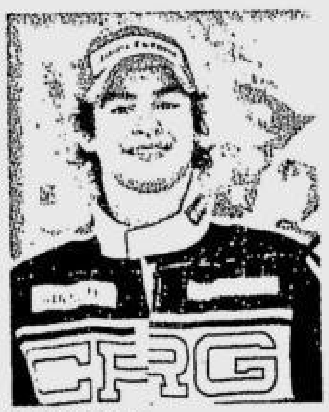
FAST & VICTORIOUS

MEET THE PHILIPPINES' motorsports champs for 2006

COSETENG


GUIDICELLI

PASCOGUIN

DESPITE THE SKYROCKETING price of fuel and a few personality clashes, Philippine motorsport was alive and well in 2006, with new faces sharing the limelight with familiar drivers.

Automobile Association Philippines (AAP), the local authority in car racing, is scheduled to fete last year's champions in various motorsport disciplines this Feb. 23 during the annual AAP Motorsport Awards at the Valle Verde Country Club.

Mandy Eduque, chair of AAP's motorsport committee, said the stage is set for the yearly awarding, with plaques to be given not only to winners of national racing events but also to those who have excelled in international competitions.

"We are continuing the practice of giving recognition to promising young drivers, something we began in AAP's 75th anniversary last year," Eduque said.

Leading this year's motorsport awardees is Eduardo Jose Marquez Coseteng, known to the whole nation simply as Jody Coseteng. The veteran saloon driver once again ruled the Philippine National Touring Car Championships (PNTCC) for his eighth title in 10 years.

Carrying the colors of the San Mig Coffee Racing Team, Coseteng piloted his Honda Civic to win Group 1 of the PNTCC. Race fanatics also adjudged Coseteng's car as the Most Handsome Car of the season.

In drag racing, Dave Jota of Blanche Racing ruled the Quick 8 and tied for third in the Pro Class to amass the most points and win the overall title in the Red Horse National Drag Racing Championships at the Batangas Racing Circuit (BRC).

Jota, driving a Honda Civic hatchback, registered 50 points in the Quick 8 to make up for his not-so-impressive showing in the Pro Class where he only managed 10 points.

The 2006 season was Jota's first year of joining the drag races at BRC, and he is happy that his sport has finally found a regular venue. He used to join and win in races organized by one drag racing association but the lack of venue prevented the regular holding of competitions.

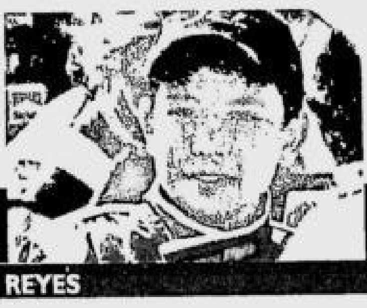
In 4x4 Offroading, it needed a winner-take-all event in far-flung Bukidnon to determine the 2006 driver of the year. The country's best and brightest offroaders all trooped to the Mangima Municipal Park in Manolo Fortich town last month with hopes of bagging the title.

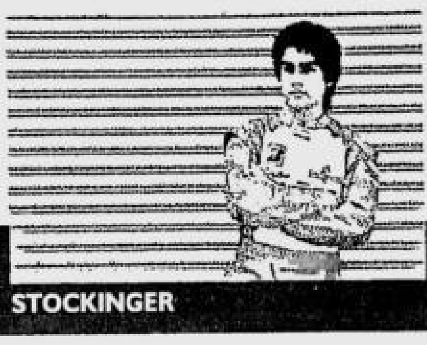
The biggest names in offroading were all there. And after the smoke of competition cleared, it was a not-so-famous driver from the Ormoc 4Wheelers Team who came out on top, edging his closest foe by a mere two seconds.

Relatively new in 4x4, businessman Gerry Doyon couldn't believe his victory at first. He was the last driver to compete and just couldn't believe that he finally beat the big guys. "*Tsamba lang,*" he said.

Meanwhile, Filipino-Italian Matteo Guidicelli ruled the local karting scene in 2006, regaining

FAST/14


REYES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REDUNDANT: As if the No Stopping sign weren't enough, the MMDA added its own pink note on this post.

SPOT THE ROAD SIGN: With clutter like this, no wonder no one's paying attention to the No Parking sign.

Makati via Wilson
Makati via P. Guevarra

BEST WAY TO MAKATI? Take your pick.

Signs of the times

IF THE DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC Works and Highways (DPWH) would have its way, all road signs and road markings in the country would be easy to read, easy to understand and in conformity with international standards.

In fact, as early as 2004, then Public Works Secretary Hermogenes Ebdane issued a department order that mandates the usage of a new manual called Highway Safety Design Standards Manual.

The manual is a compendium of internationally prescribed designs for construction of highways and roads as well as the road signs and pavement markings agreed upon by members of the United Nations in 1968 under what is known as the Vienna Convention.

Engineer Sol Genota, chief of the Project Evaluation Division of DPWH, said the two-volume manual has been printed and distributed to all DPWH offices and various concerned agencies nationwide.

The DPWH, according to her, has also conducted seminars for law enforcement agencies to orient them on international road signs.

However, insufficient funding and some "political reasons" have prevented key government agencies from complying with the manual.

"It's just unfortunate that because of the lack of funds, the compliance is rather slow," she said. "But at least, things are moving," she was quick to add.

Vital signs

International road signs are vital in keeping roads safe. Framers of the UN Vienna Convention were aware that signs made of drawings are more effective in communicating to motorists of various races and cultures than words. This is why international signs are composed mostly of drawings.

Under the Vienna Convention, there are eight kinds of signs, namely Danger Warning signs, Priority signs, Prohibitory or Restrictive signs, Mandatory signs, Special regulation signs, Facilities or Service signs, Direction Indication signs, and Additional or Miscellaneous panels.

Danger Warning signs are either triangles or diamonds usually with red borders, white backgrounds and black symbols. Diamond signs usually have black borders, yellow backgrounds and black symbols. Other warning signs have flashing yellow lights to call attention. An exclamation on a sign means general danger and an additional panel should explain the exact danger, but some countries, especially the United States, just put words on the signs.

Priority signs, on the other hand, regulate the right-of-way. International yield signs are downward triangles. Red octagons are for stop signs only. A sign for a priority road is a yellow diamond with a white border.

Prohibitory or restrictive signs are usually circular with red borders. Most signs have a white or yellow background. International signs prohibiting parking and stopping have a blue background.

Mandatory signs are usually circular with blue backgrounds. Mandatory signs in Australia, Canada and the United States are white rectangles with black or red symbols or words that may not comply with international designs.

Facilities or service signs are rectangular and show the services along the roads. Most countries use blue on them.

Direction, position or indication signs guide users on the roads to where they are going. They are usually rectangular.

Local signs

Road signs in the country are interesting—if not confusing—because of different influences and the tendency to disregard the international standards set by the UN Vienna Convention. In many areas, the American design is followed. And it is probably here where you see a lot of donated signs, with the name of the donor or sponsor being part of the sign.

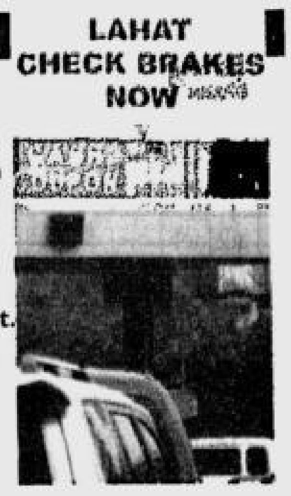
Engineer Aileen Mappala of the University of the Philippines' National Center for Transportation Studies, said the Philippines truly needs a "bible" of road signs to be able to regulate or at least raise the standard of road signs.

She noted that to be effective, road signs must adhere to certain criteria and must conform with the following qualifications: 1. They must command attention; 2. They must command respect; 3. They must serve a need; 4. They must convey clear and simple message; and 5. They must give ample time for proper response.

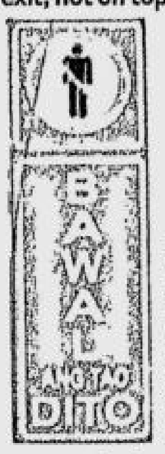
Mappala said that signs made of cardboard or shoddily painted on pieces of scrap plywood would not command respect and would eventually fail to serve its purpose.

Signs also must be easy to understand. If not, they are of no use to motorists.

"Motorists, pedestrians and other road users should first know what a sign means before you use such a sign," Mappala pointed out. "Like the pavement markings on intersections, many motorists do not know what that box means. Clearly, education is needed for signs and markings to be effective," she said.



TOO LATE: This check brakes sign put up as part of an cellphone network advertisement should have been placed before the exit, not on top of it.



NO HUMANS ALLOWED: This pink sign put up by the Metro Manila Development Authority is a vain, if not utterly preposterous, attempt at discouraging jaywalkers on Santolan street in San Juan.

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AAP Web Site: www.aaphilippines.org

AAP Email Address: info@aap.org.ph

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Alabang: Motor Town (beside LTO branch), Alabang Town Center, Muntinlupa City. Tel. 796-0653

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AAP pushes for measures vs drunk driving

IT IS THE SECOND REASON FOR ROAD accidents in the world. But in the Philippines, drunk driving has yet to be considered a serious criminal offense.

Automobile Association Philippines (AAP) is urging members of the present Congress to finally pass the law that would make driving under the influence (DUI) of liquor or drugs a serious crime.

AAP vice president Johnny Angeles said it is about time that authorities give serious attention to drunk drivers who should be considered potential murderers due to their impaired faculties.

"Alcohol blurs one's vision, makes one lose control and coordination, slows reflexes and increases drowsiness," Angeles says. "No drunk person should be allowed to be behind the wheel of a motor vehicle."

Driving drunk has not been given the proper attention by law enforcers and the country's antiquated traffic law doesn't even prescribe a legal blood alcohol content limit for drivers operating a vehicle. The law only states that licensed drivers are prohibited to drive while under the influence of alcohol or prohibited drugs, with the LTO and MMDA prescribing a P2,000 fine for the first offense.

However, no one seems to be getting arrested for drunk driving as proven by records from the Philippine National Police. Why? The police do not know how to prove that a driver is really under the influence since there is no way to measure the level of alcohol in the driver's blood.

And more often than not, the police do not arrest the drunk driver unless someone is injured or killed.

Angeles also noted that the mandatory drug testing given before one is issued a driver's license is again of little use because this only happens once every three years and the driver—assuming he is a drug user—can abstain from drug use before taking the test.

He explained that the first step in curbing drunk driving is to acknowledge that the problem is growing and that a DUI Law should immediately be passed.

The World Health Organization has said that road accidents worldwide usually cause 1.2 million deaths and 50 million injuries each year —with 480,000 of the deaths and 20 million of the injured caused by drunk driving.

Senators Richard Gordon and Manny Villar have filed their proposed DUI measures while in the House of Representatives, Parañaque Rep. Eduardo Zialcita has also came up with his own bill. All these measures are one in prescribing stiff fines with corresponding jail terms for DUI offenders.

Angeles added that the Philippines can opt to adopt the blood alcohol concentration regulations from other countries such as the United States and equip the police with sufficient technology to check on drunk drivers.

"Random checks are a much more effective deterrent than tri-annual testing. You can catch a person in the act and prevent him from causing injuries. The best places to do this are those with the highest concentration of bars and clubs, where people coming out and driving off will most probably be intoxicated," he said.

Angeles added that AAP is willing to donate four breath analyzing equipment to the four police districts of Metro Manila just to kick start a campaign against drunk driving.

"There is really no reason why drunk driving should continue. We must act now, before it's too late," he said.

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GPS now in AAP trucks

STARTING FEBRUARY, ALL AAP tow trucks will be equipped with Global Positioning System (GPS) tracking devices for faster deployment.

AAP operates one of the country's biggest fleets of tow trucks which have come to be known as the Yellow Angels because of their bright yellow paint and because they provide relief to motorists in distress. Mostly flatbed trucks, these vehicles regularly serve Metro Manila's major thoroughfares and are the only ones authorized to operate inside the North Luzon Expressway.

AAP vice president Johnny Angeles said that the GPS tracking devices will enable AAP to manage its tow trucks more efficiently.

"With this technology, we can now pinpoint the exact location of our trucks and tell members specifically how much time they have to wait before their cars are towed," he said.

Hari, PCE ink MOA for Pro Negosyo, Go Negosyo

HYUNDAI ASIA RESOURCES INC (Hari), Hyundai vehicles exclusive local distributor, joins forces with the Philippine Center for Entrepreneurship (PCE) for a more strident reverberation of their mutual call, Pro Negosyo and Go Negosyo!

Stirred by a common conviction that the entrepreneurs are the backbone of a society, Hari and PCE separately launched different but synonymous slogans to encourage and support these entrepreneurs, particularly those in the small to medium enterprises (SMEs) who comprise the base or the larger part of the economy.

Since its inception in 2005, PCE, a non-stock, non-profit and the preeminent local institution that promotes entrepreneurship nationwide, started to advocate "GoNegosyo" to encourage healthy and positive entrepreneurial mindsets among the Filipinos and help create an environment conducive for starting a business.

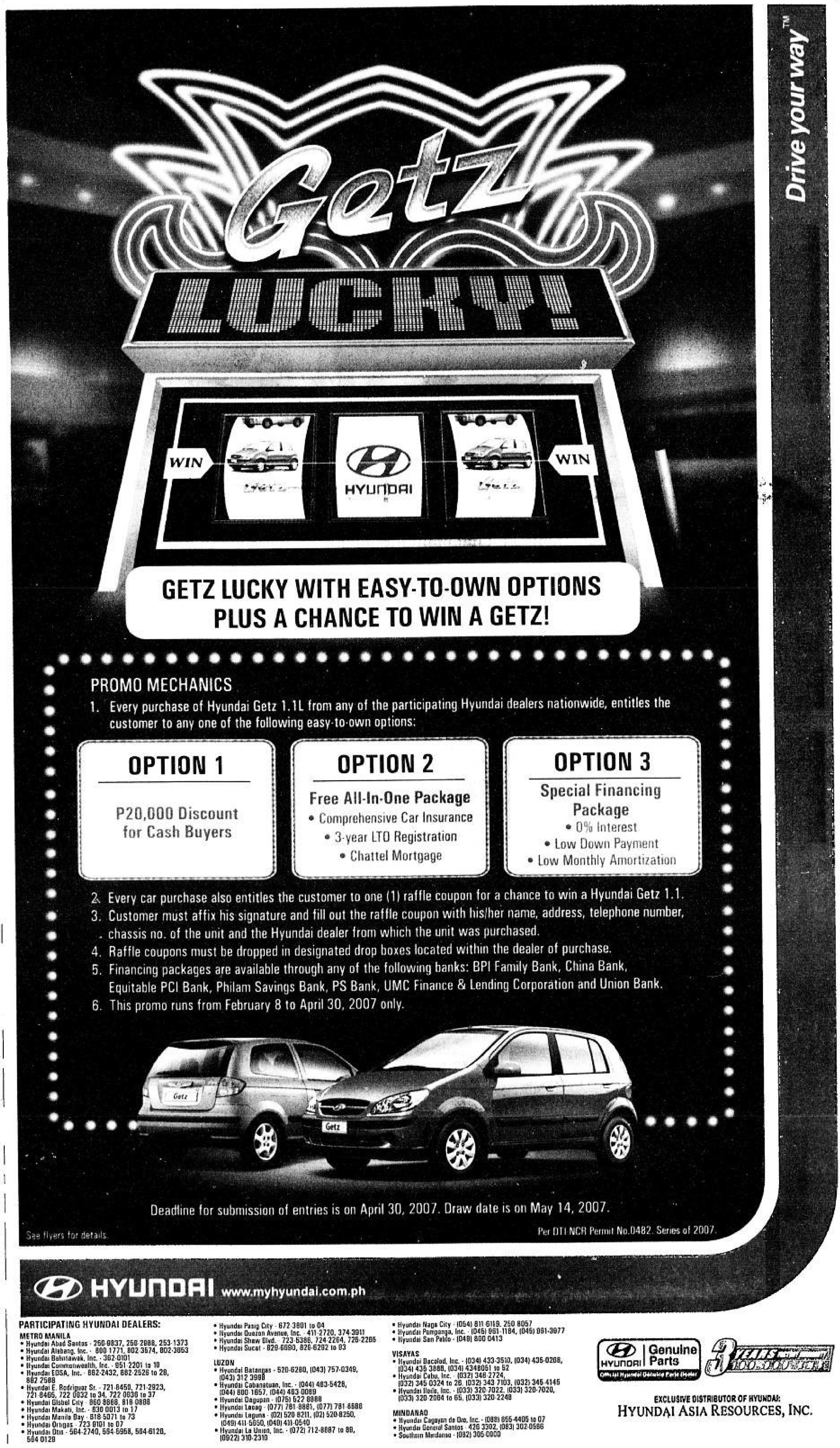
On the other hand, Hari initiated the PRO Negosyo Movement, an active and explicit expression of Hyundai's standpoint to support the entrepreneurs. Launched in October 2006 with the introduction of the new Starex PRO series, Hari's new variant of the family favorite Starex van that caters to the specific needs of businesses particularly in the transportation aspect, PRO Negosyo Movement is Hari's banner in pushing this advocacy through different activities and tie-ups like the series of business forums held recently in the different Hyundai dealers in Metro Manila and Central Luzon, and the Starex PRO donation to Gawad Kalinga's Pangkabuhayan projects.

Bound by the same dignified aims, Hari and PCE now puts their voices together for a louder shout of their cause as they formally establish a tie-up that will echo each other's rallying call.

With Hari's tie up with PCE, Hari is officially recognized as PCE's non-exclusive auto partner and official gold sponsor for the year 2007, which covers the GoNegosyo activities and events all year round. In further support of PCE's activities and undertakings, Hari vowed to provide PCE with two Hyundai Starex PRO vehicles.

With these efforts, Hari further affirms its sincere commitment to contribute to the economic, environmental, and social sustainability of the community through innovative technology, business solutions, and social advocacy.

IN LINE with its Pro Negosyo Movement, Hyundai Asia Resources Inc (Hari) seals the agreement with the Philippine Center for Entrepreneurship (PCE) as the non-exclusive auto partner and official gold sponsor of Go Negosyo Events for 2007. Present during the contract signing are (from left): Ramon Lopez, PCE executive director; Jose Ma. Concepcion, PCE founding trustee; Ma. Fe Perez-Agudo, Hari EVP and COO; and Leica V. Holt, Hari marketing manager.



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3. Customer must affix his signature and fill out the raffle coupon with his/her name, address, telephone number, chassis no. of the unit and the Hyundai dealer from which the unit was purchased.
4. Raffle coupons must be dropped in designated drop boxes located within the dealer of purchase.
5. Financing packages are available through any of the following banks: BPI Family Bank, China Bank, Equitable PCI Bank, Philam Savings Bank, PS Bank, UMC Finance & Lending Corporation and Union Bank.
6. This promo runs from February 8 to April 30, 2007 only.

Deadline for submission of entries is on April 30, 2007. Draw date is on May 14, 2007.

See flyers for details.

Per DTI NCR Permit No.0482. Series of 2007.

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Making Motoring Fun

By Gus Lagman, AAP President

How's My Driving?

WHOEVER THOUGHT OF ATTACHING this question to a motor vehicle's bumper should be given the Nobel Prize for Road Safety if ever there is one. Countless lives have undoubtedly been saved through this feedback mechanism.

In recent years, this question has been extended to include teenage drivers. In the United States, a nation where 10,000 teen drivers die yearly due to road accidents, parents can now get mail or e-mails from drivers on how their sons or daughters are behaving behind the wheel - thanks to the website Tell-My-Mom.com.

The website is the brainchild of Jay Van Zeeland, an emergency medical technician who, almost seven years ago, had a near run-in with a teenage girl who beat a red light.

The teenager nearly hit Van Zeeland's car while going into a gas station. Van Zeeland spoke with the girl and told her that she needed to be more careful. But instead of becoming remorseful and apologizing, the girl told Van Zeeland not to bother her in words which "would make sailors blush."

The incident made Van Zeeland think: There has to be a way for parents to find out about their teen's driving behavior. While driving home, he saw the "How's My Driving?" sticker on the back of a truck, and the website's concept was born.

Now, thousands of parents have attached the "How's My Driving?" sticker on their car or their teenager's car. Other drivers simply call the number on the sticker if they have anything to complain about. The website contacts the parents via mail or e-mail with this information and utilizing this info, they get the chance to teach their sons or daughters the correct driving techniques.

Van Zeeland said he is projecting at least a 20-percent reduction in road accidents involving teenage drivers. "Studies have shown that when a parent takes an active role in a teen's driving, and is made aware of his or her driving habits, many injuries or fatalities can be prevented," he said.

In the Philippines, Automobile Association Philippines has embarked on a similar program that seeks to make our roads safer. AAP operates the National Driving Academy which teaches would-be drivers, including teenagers, not only the proper skills but the right attitude in driving safely. AAP also has a Road Safety Call Center that accepts calls from motorists reporting on any hazard they see on the road. The number is contained in a separate story in this supplement.

In the future, we will be launching safe driving outreach programs for teenagers, especially those in public schools. Though these kids usually don't have cars at home, many of them eventually become drivers of buses, jeepneys and taxicabs. Educating them early would be beneficial not only to them but to all road users in general.

AUTOMOBILE ASSOCIATION AAP 1931 PHILIPPINES

The National Auto Club

PREMIUM SUVs were tested for Car of the Year 2006 at Forest Hills Jan. 27: Honda Pilot, Subaru Outback, Mercedes-Benz ML 350 and Nissan Murano. All are fielded in the Luxury SUV class except the ML 350, which is categorized as an Ultra-Luxury SUV.

Did you know?

-- That AAP members enjoy 15-percent discount at Enchanted Kingdom (entrance), 15-percent discount at Domino's Pizza, 20-percent discount at La Vista Pansol (entrance and room), 10-percent discount on Meguiar's car care products and 10-percent discount at all Blade Auto Centers (5 percent on non-Blade products);

-- That AAP members get personal accident insurance for free; the insurance has been increased to P300,000 and comes from Federal Phoenix which signed a deal with AAP to be its partner in Compulsory Third Party Liability (CTPL) insurance and comprehensive motor car insurance.

-- That an AAP member can avail of towing services for another person's car even if the member is not the one driving (provided he or she is at the scene).

-- That companies can join AAP as corporate members. Corporate membership costs only P500 per car.

-- That companies and employers can tap AAP to give tests to their drivers under the Driver's Certification Course. Pharmaceutical companies are already doing this for their med reps.

FAST & VICTORIOUS

From page II

the Karter of the Year title he first won in 2004. Despite experiencing engine trouble in qualifying and handling problems in a rain-drenched final, Guidicelli kept his cool and emerged victorious in the last leg of the Shell Super Karting Series in Carmona, Cavite.

The 16-year-old driver with movie star looks raced for Alessandra Racing. Plagued by an underpowered engine, he started from seventh place in the finals, but steadily inched his way to the front and finally took the lead on the ninth lap of the 20-lap finals. At the checkered flag, Guidicelli had a two-second lead over the second placer, winning the overall championship in one of the tightest title duels in Philippine karting history.

In slalom, Noel Rivera of Big Chill Racing slammed all opposition to finally capture his first ever driver of the year title in the National Slalom Grand Prix.

Driving a Toyota Starlet, the 43-year-old Rivera won majority of races to beat veteran drivers for the title. It was Rivera's best year since 2002 when he switched to Starlet from his old VW Buggy. And it was the realization of a dream that began when Rivera won the Novice Driver of the Year in 2003.

Other AAP motorsport awardees excelled in international events, particularly the Asian Karting Championships.

Franco Reyes, a Grade 4 student in the Ateneo Grade School, won the Cadet 60 Division of the Macau International Kart Grand Prix held at the Kartodromo de Coloane in Macau last December.

Reyes, of Jet Racing Team, dominated all Cadet 60 races from the qualifying heats, the pre-finals, all the way to the finals to bring home the overall title in the Cadet 60 division in the Asian Karting Open Championships (AKOC).

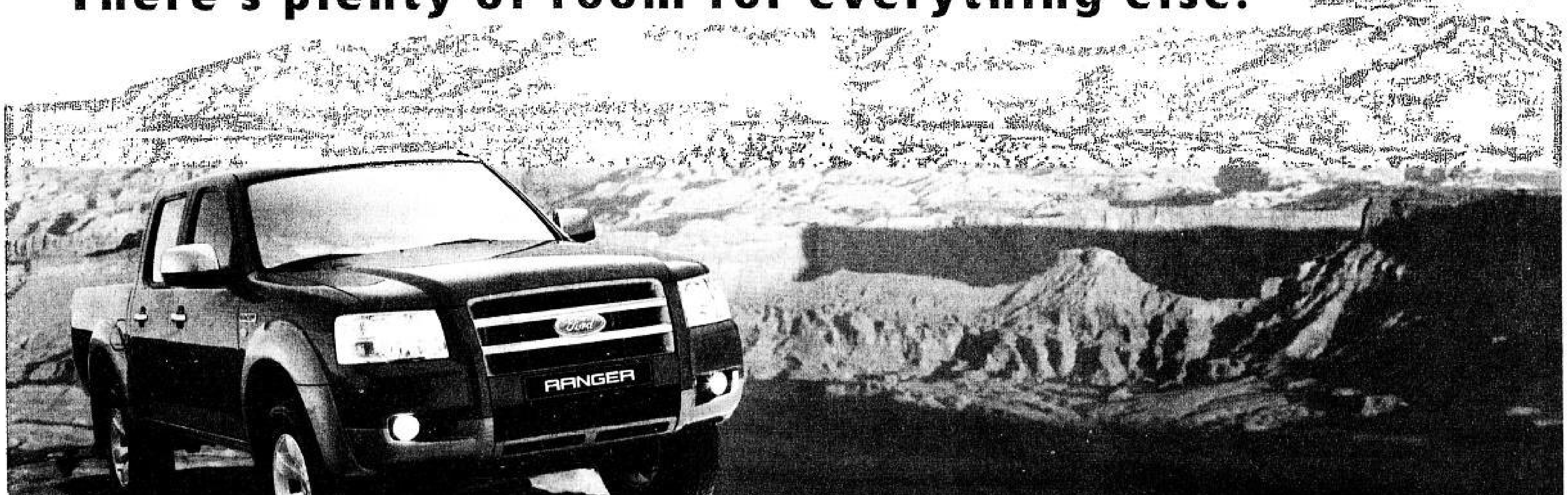
A teammate of Reyes, 11-year-old Renz William Pascoguin was the top winner in the Mini ROK Division of the AKOC. Only in his second year of competition, Pascoguin emerged as his division's overall champion, a fitting follow-up to his victory in Cadet 60 in the Philippines in 2005.

And finally, 14-year-old Marlon Stockinger of Team Birel Philippines wrapped up both the Senior 125 Open and the Rotax Max Asian Championship for the 2006 season to be the region's top karter in his division.

After winning both the Malaysian and the Philippine leg in the 125 Open category of Asia's biggest karting competition, the two-time world finalist completed his romp by capping the season with his Macau wins.

Eduque said the victories of these young karters are a good sign that Philippine motorsport is full of promise and potential.

"These are the hope of the sport and the AAP is truly banking on them to take Philippine motorsport to new heights. With them driving, the future of motorsport is truly bright indeed," he said.



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PHILIPPINE DAILY INQUIRER

Gateway to your Dream Vacation
14th TRAVEL TOUR EXPO 2007
February 9-11, 2007
Megatrade Hall 1, 2 & 3, Level 5 Bldg. B
SM Megamall, Mandaluyong City

SPECIAL NEWSPAPER SUPPLEMENT FRIDAY FEBRUARY 9, 2007

RP's biggest travel and tour expo opens today

By Joel V. Nigos

THE COUNTRY'S tourism industry would get another big boost as the Philippines' largest travel and tour expo, the Philippine Travel Agencies Association's 14th Travel Tour Expo, opens today at the Megatrade Hall of SM Megamall in Mandaluyong City. The exhibit would run until Feb. 11.

Held annually since 1994, this year's edition of the Expo dubbed "Gateway to Your Dream Vacation" is expected to draw nearly 100,000 visitors who will be looking to find attractive tour packages, travel discounts, and souvenir items from the country's biggest travel agencies, cruise operators, airlines, hotels, resorts and shops. People from all walks of life are expected to visit the fair because of the wide variety of products that will be sold. Visitors include travel and tourism trade practitioners, corporate and business travelers, holiday travelers, incentive and convention planners, government and business leaders, direct buyers and investors.

According to Marciano Ragaza, overall chair of the 2007 Travel Tour Expo (TTE) and one of PTAA's past presidents, exhibitors of the fair include travel agencies, cruise operators, travel and shop, airlines, national tourism organizations and embassies, hotels, resorts, tour operators, international tour operators, global distribution systems, media and other partners, and related tourism establishments and suppliers.

Among the Philippine agencies participating are the Department of Tourism, Philippine Tourism Authority, Philippine Retirement Authority, Bataan Tourism Council, Cagayan Valley Region Ecotours, Department of Tourism Region 1 and Region 9, Davao Tourism Authority, Panglao Tourism Council, Provincial Government of Bulacan, and the Subic Bay Metropolitan Authority.

Several Asian countries and territories including China, Hong Kong, India, Macau, Malaysia, Marianas Islands, Sabah, Singapore, Taiwan and Thailand together with Egypt, Guam, Israel and South Africa will also have their respective tourism offices present at the Expo as they target traveling Filipinos who are looking for affordable travel packages abroad.

Among the airline exhibitors present are Air France-KLM Royal Dutch Airlines, American Airlines, China Airlines, Continental Airlines, Gulf Air, Japan Airlines, Lufthansa German Airlines, Northwest Airlines, Royal Brunei Airlines and Singapore Airlines while cruise operators include Best Cruises N' Resorts, Cruise Professionals, Star Cruises, Sun Cruises (Magsaysay Travel) and Travel Wide Associated Sales Inc.

Open to the public for a minimal entrance fee, the Expo will also showcase various presentations from participating companies, a diving lecture, boudaville show, dance numbers, magic show and a raffle of surprise prizes.

P215 million in sales

Ragaza shares that they expect the fair to generate about P215 million in total sales. Last year, the exhibit has generated total sales volume of P207 million, a huge increase from the P139.5 million and P138.3 million in sales obtained in 2005 and 2004, respectively. He adds that the Expo would still benefit from the increased awareness the industry now has, thanks largely to the aggressive tourism campaign of the DOT which began during the stewardship of former Tourism Secretary and now Sen. Richard Gordon and which continued under current Tourism Secretary Joseph Ace Durano.

He encourages everybody to come to the fair because "all the exhibitors would sell their products at a very low price. Airlines would sell their plane tickets to as much as 70-percent off the usual gross ticket price."

"That's why the Expo is dubbed as 'Gateway to Your Dream Vacation,'" he says. "With this fair, we are giving everybody an opening, an opportunity for them to finally fulfill their dreams of having to go to some other place because here they can buy cheap airfares, accommodations, tour packages, etc."

Ragaza further shares that indeed the exhibit has developed into a consumer fair. "When we started holding the exhibit in 1994 and up until 1998, there was no selling involved. The fair was purely an exhibition," he says. "In 1999," he continues, "we began selling, thus, it became a venue for travelers to buy tour packages, airline tickets, accommodations and a wide variety of tourism products at huge discounts. The result was very encouraging that was why beginning in 2000 the fair has become an Expo with full blown selling of travel products and services."

Sponsors

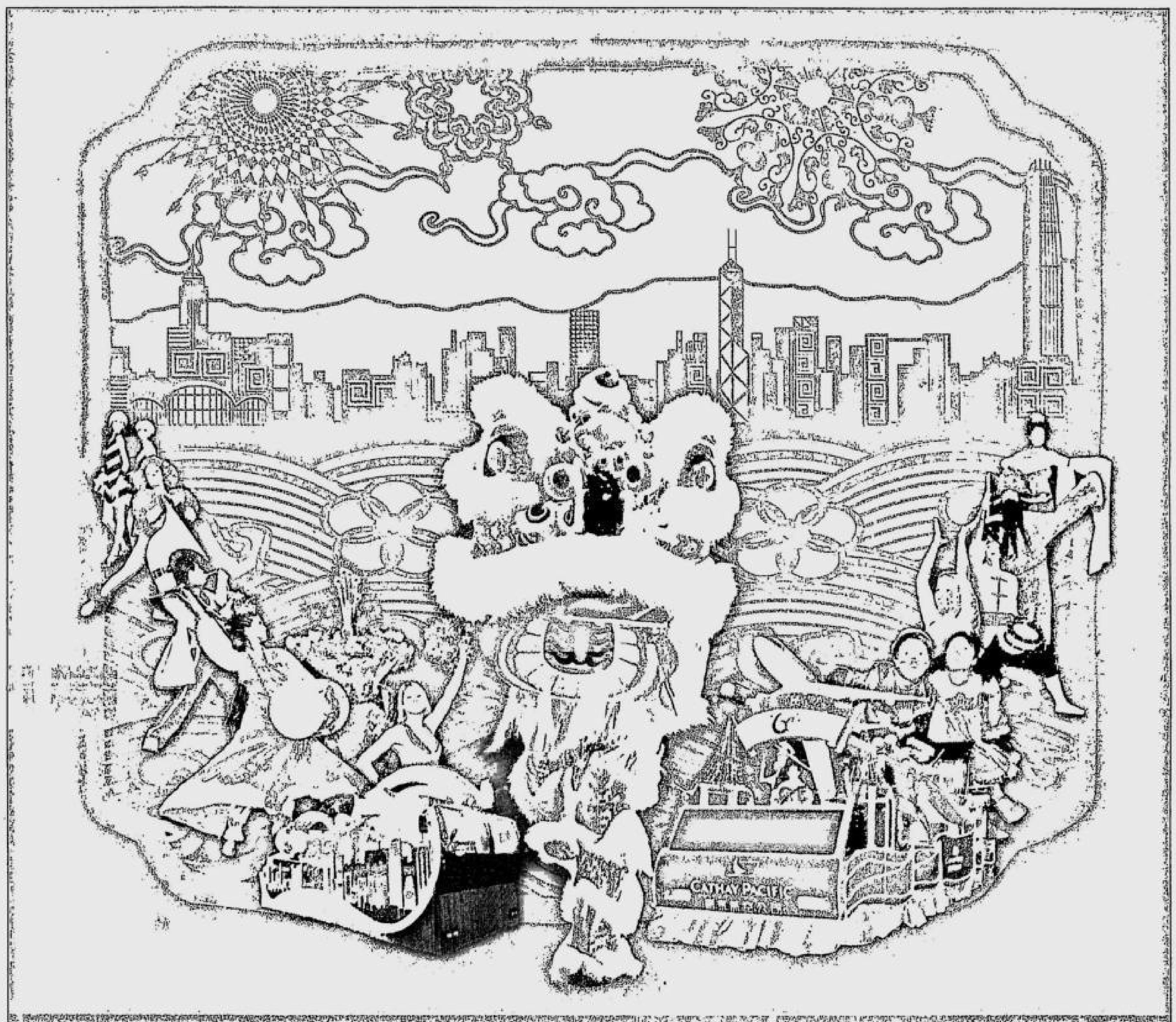
The Expo is sponsored by the Department of Tourism and Philippine Airlines which is also the exhibit's official carrier. Globe Handyphone and Globe Broadband are silver sponsors while bronze sponsors are Galileo by Travelport, the Israel Embassy and SM Megatrade Halls. Air Philippines is the fair's airline sponsor while BCS Systems and Technologies has been tapped as the registration systems provider and Team Graphics Solutions as the identification card partner. The Philippine Daily Inquirer is one of the media sponsors of the event.

The PTTA is an organization borne out of the union of the national associations of the outbound travel agencies and inbound tour operators in 1979. It has a total of 433 members as of December 2006.

Founded to foster unity in the travel industry and to promote the welfare of its members and the traveling public as well, the PTAA has evolved into one that now plays a vital role in national and international tourism.

Regarded as the most prestigious association in the travel industry in the country, it is widely recognized by international airlines, hotels, resorts, insurance, and cruise companies. It also works closely with government agencies such as the Department of Tourism, the Department of Foreign Affairs, Philippine Convention and Visitors Corp., Bureau of

RP'S/P.2



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Ancient customs mingle with modern fun in one of the world's biggest Chinese New Year Celebrations.

But there's also a lot more to enjoy besides the night parade. Experience beautiful colours and delightful fragrances at the Flower Markets from 12 to 17 February or marvel at the dazzling Fireworks Display on 19 February.

And for sports buffs, there's the Chinese New Year Horseracing on 20 February and the International Soccer Tournament, besides a host of other events.

So catch all the excitement between 7 and 21 February and discover all that Hong Kong has to offer during Chinese New Year.

For more information on Hong Kong, please visit DiscoverHongKong.com or contact your local travel agent.

Information is correct as of January 2007 and is subject to change.
[illegible]

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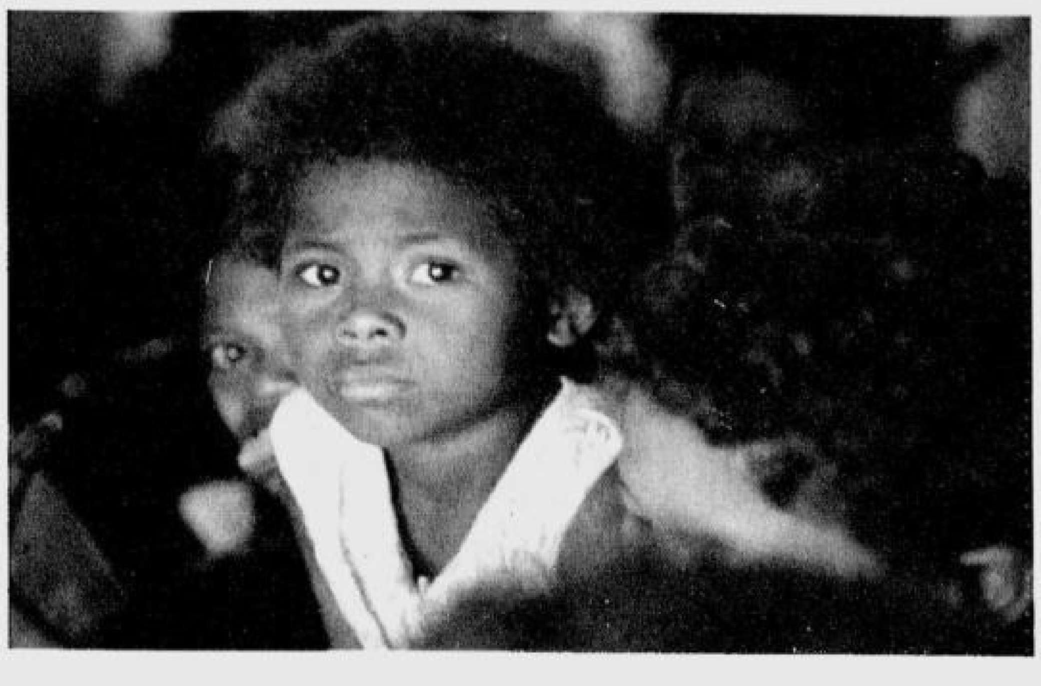
PTAA cheers up Aeta community in Pinatubo

FOR THE 2ND TIME, the Philippine Travel Agencies Association (PTAA) visited its adopted community in Sitio Alunan in Mt. Pinatubo. Held on Jan. 19, 2007, the community is composed of 143 Aeta schoolchildren and 125 families.

Jose C. Clemente III, PTAA president said that this is a continuing project of the association aimed at assisting the Aeta schoolchildren in their studies by providing them with school supplies, T-shirts, slippers, bags and the repainting of their school premises. They have also given basic food items to their respective families. The outreach project was started by Nit Ragaza, PTAA past president and ex-officio in 2004.

The community is about two hours drive by 4x4 vehicle and three to four hours by foot from the foot of the mountain. But such distance was never a hindrance for people who are willing to help.

Boysen Paints, Procter & Gamble, Colgate-Palmolive, Hanabishi, Hapee Toothpaste, Toby's, Embassy of Austria, Travel Counselors, Abacast, Universal Holidays, and Mr. and Mrs. Cacho have made the outreach project possible.



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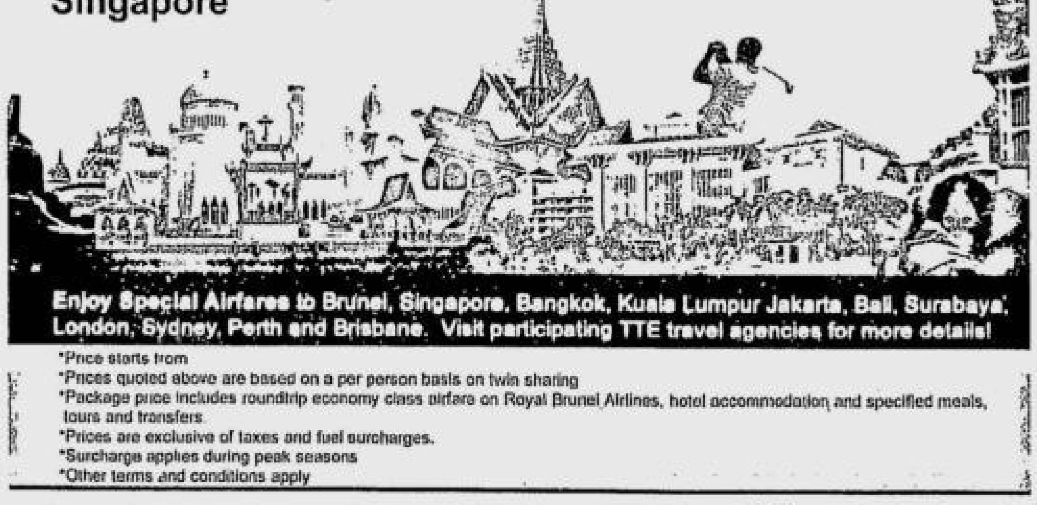

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Fuego Hotels participates in 14th Travel Tour Expo

FOR THE FIFTH CONSECUTIVE YEAR FUEGO Hotels and Properties Management Corporation is once again participating in the upcoming 14th Travel Tour Expo 2007, slated Feb. 9 to 11, at Megatrade Halls 1 to 3 of SM Megamall. Fuego Hotels is the managing group that oversees the operations of Club Punta Fuego in Nasugbu, Batangas; Taal Vista Hotel in Tagaytay City, Cavite and Pearl Farm Beach Resort in Samal Island, Davao.

Fuego Hotel's Managing Director Alfredo Roca is very confident on the development of Fuego's business together with the entire tourism industry's continued growth. "It is organizations such as the Philippine Travel Agencies Association with the help of the government through the D.O.T. that investors in the tourism industry will continue to have a positive outlook. Our *felicidades* to the organizing committee of this year's Travel Tour Expo!" said Roca.

For the latest events and special packages from the Fuego properties, you can check out their booth during the Travel Tour Expo at SM Megamall or visit www.fuegohotels.com.

RP's biggest travel and tour expo...

From page 1

Immigration, the Ninoy Aquino International Airport, the National Statistics Office and various embassies and consulates. The premiere travel industry organization is currently affiliated with the Asean Tourism Association (Aseanta), Federation of Asean Travel Agencies (FATA), and the United Federation of Travel Agents Association (UFTAA). Locally, it represents the travel industry sector in the Air Safety Foundation, Philippine Chamber of Commerce and Industry, Hotel and Tourism Institute of the Philippines, Tourism Industry Board Foundation, Federation of Philippine Industries Inc., Pacific Asia Travel Association-Philippine Chapter, National Tourism Council Board, and the Federation of Tourism Industries in the Philippines.

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Membership Meeting

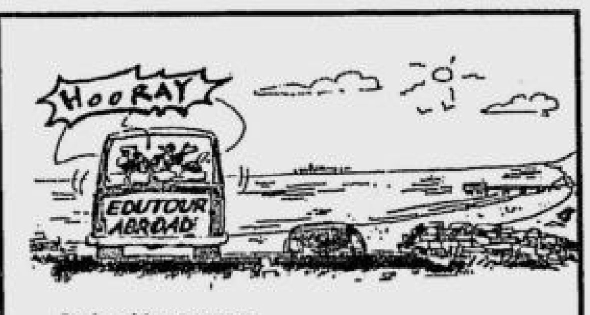
PTAA NEW OFFICERS

(From left) Tourism Secretary Joseph "Ace" Durano (inducting officer), Marlene D. Jante (trustee), Mary T. Chua (trustee), Sylvia L. Sangco (trustee), and Raymond Michael A. Tee (trustee). (Not in photo) Teodoro R. Bautista (trustee), Norma D. Cacho (public relations officer), Paul L. So (auditor), Merle E. Villacorta (assistant treasurer), Lulu V. Velasco (treasurer), Tellie P. Francisco (assistant secretary general), Ma. Paz R. Alberto (secretary general), John Paul M. Cabalza (VP inbound), Maucie Cuna (VP outbound), Ma. Bella M. Cantada (executive vice president) and Jose C. Clemente III (president).

PTAA 1ST GMM, INDUCTION OF OFFICERS, ART EXHIBIT HELD

The Philippine Travel Agencies Association (PTAA) recently held its first general membership meeting and induction of officers at the Peninsula Manila, Makati City. Held last Jan. 24, Tourism Secretary Joseph "Ace" Durano was the inducting officer. Durano also graced the opening of the art exhibit dubbed "Art for a Cause for the Aeta Children of Pinatubo." PTAA members participated in the event through paint a portrait done by an artist in 15 minutes for a minimal cost. They also bought paintings which are works of famous artists. Philippine Airlines was the main sponsor of the event.

What will my teen aged kids do this summer?



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Spanish Experience (Madrid, Toledo, Seville, Gibraltar, Costa del Sol, Granada)	8 days from $ 950.00*
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14th TRAVELTOUR EXPO - 2007
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11th PHILIPPINE INTERNATIONAL hotair BALLOON FIESTA

Feb. 8 - 11, 2007
CLARKFIELD PAMPANGA

SCHEDULE

Feb. 8 - FIRST FIESTA DAY
Thurs.

- Hot Air Balloon Flight	5:30 AM - 7:40 AM
- 600th PAF Air Base Wing Band performance	6:00 AM
- Flag Jump by Phil Army Parachute Team	6:15
- Aerobatic show by Bill Wright and Meynard Halili	7:40 AM - 8:40 AM
- Sky Diving Demonstration by AFP skydivers	8:40 AM - 9:40 AM
- Paramania and Malaysian Team Paragliding Exhibition	9:40 AM - 10:30 AM
- Micro light Flying Demonstration by Albert Mendoza	10:30 AM - 10:45 AM
- Angeles City Flying Club Ultra Light Formation Flying	10:45 AM - 11:30 AM
- Gyro Plane Flying Demonstration by Gyroplane Rotorcraft	11:30 AM - 12:00PM
- AOPA-P Light Airplane Fly By	12:00 AM - 1:00 PM
- Kite exhibition by Kite Team Philippines	1:00 PM - 2:00 PM
- RC Demonstration Flying by Joel Paje and UP Flying G	2:00 PM - 3:00 PM
- Airlink / omni Fly-By	3:00 PM - 4:00 PM
- Ultra Light vs Motocross bike race	4:00 PM - 4:30 PM
- Malaysian and Paramania Paragliding Exhibition	4:30 PM - 5:00 PM
- Hot Air Balloon fly in	5:20 PM - 6:00 PM

Feb.9 - SECOND FIESTA DAY
Fri

- Hot Air Balloon Flight	5:30 AM - 7:40 AM
- 600th PAF Air Base Wing Band performance	6:00 AM
- Flag Jump by Phil Army Parachute Team	6:15
- Aerobatic show by Bill Wright and Meynard Halili	7:40 AM - 8:40 AM
- Sky Diving Demonstration by AFP skydivers	8:40AM - 9:40 AM
- Paramania and Malaysian Team Paragliding Exhibition	9:40 AM - 10:30 AM
- Micro light Flying Demonstration by Albert Mendoza	10:30 AM - 10:45 AM
- Angeles City Flying Club Ultra Light Formation Flying	10:45 AM - 11:30 AM
- Gyro Plane Flying Demonstration by Gyroplane Rotorcraft	11:30 AM - 12:00 PM
- Airlink Light Airplane Fly By	12:00 AM - 1:00 PM
- Kite exhibition by Kite Team Philippines	1:00 PM - 2:00 PM
- Radio Control Aircraft Flying by N. Hadeki and A. Ishimura	2:00 PM - 3:00 PM
- AOPA-P light aircraft Balloon Bursting Competition	3:00 PM - 4:00 PM
- CIAC Crash Fire and Rescue demo	4:00 PM - 4:30 PM
- Paramania and Malaysian Paragliding Exhibition	4:30 PM - 5:20 PM
- Hot Air Balloon Flights	5:30 PM - 6:00 PM
- Local Pampanga Band concert	6:00 PM - onwards
- Hot Air balloon night Glow	6:45 PM - 7:30 PM

Feb. 10 - THIRD FIESTA DAY
Sat.

- Hot Air Balloon Flight	5:30 AM - 7:40 AM
- Philippine Marine Drum and Bugle Team Exhibition	6:15 AM - 6:40 PM
- Flag Jump by Phil Army Sky Diving	6:30 AM - 6:45 AM
- Aerobatic Exhibition by Meynard Halili and Bill Wright	8:00 AM - 8:45 AM
- AFP Mass Sky diving Demo on Air Force C130	8:45 AM - 9:30 AM
- Paramania and Malaysian team Paragliding exhibition	9:30 AM - 10:15 AM
- Microlite and Ultralight Fly-By	10:15 AM - 11:00 AM
- Paragliding Exhibition by French and Malaysian team	10:30 AM - 11:00 AM
- AOPA-P Light Airplane Balloon Bursting competition	11:00 AM - 12:30 PM
- Choreographed Kite Flying demonstration by Fort Boni Sport Kite Com	12:30 PM - 1:30 PM
- Angeles City Flying Club Ultra-Light Bomb Dropping exhibition	1:30 PM - 2:30 PM
- Gyro Plane Flying but Gyroplane Rotorcraft	2:30 PM - 3:00 PM
- RC helicopter flying demonstration by Rufino Syjueco	3:00 PM - 3:45 PM
- Arnel Noel Rocketry Demonstration	3:45 PM - 4:00 PM
- Airlink / omni light Aircraft Fly-By	4:00 PM - 4:30 PM
- ABS CBN Variety Show	4:00 PM onwards
- Paramania and Malaysian Team Paragliding Exhibition	4:30 PM - 5:20 PM
- Hot Air Balloon Flight	5:45 PM - 6:15 PM
- Hot Air Balloon Night Glow	6:45 PM - 7:30 PM

Feb. 11 LAST FIESTA DAY
Sun

- Hot Air Balloon flight	5:30 AM - 7:40 AM
- 600th Air Base Wing Band Performance	6.00
- Flag Jump by Phil Army Parachute Team	6:15
- AFP Sky- Diving Exhibition	7:40 AM - 8:00 AM
- Aerobatic Exhibition by Meynard Halili, Xavier Estabillo, and Bill Wright	8:00 AM - 8:45 AM
- Microlite and Ultralight Fly- By	8:45 AM - 9:30 AM
- Missionary Helo- STOL aircraft Demo	9:30 AM - 10:00 AM
- Helicopter Flying exhibition	10:00 AM - 10:30 AM
- AOPA-P Regional Summit Meeting	10:30 AM - 3:00 PM
- Airlink light airplane fly by	10:30 AM - 11:00 AM
- AOPA-P Light Airplane Balloon Bursting Competition	11:00 AM - 12:30 PM
- Choreographed Kite flying Demonstration	12:30 PM - 1:30 PM
- Ultra-Light Flour Bombing Competition	1:30 PM - 2:30 PM
- RC Airplane flying Demonstration by Alvin Alcantara	2:30 PM - 3:15 PM
- Gyro Plane Flight Demo by Gyro Plane Rotorcraft	3:15 PM - 3:45 PM
- Ultra light vs Motocross bike race	3:45 PM - 4:15 PM
- Paramania and Malaysian Paragliding Team exhibition	4:15 PM - 5:00 PM
- Arnel Noel Rocketry Demonstration	5:00 PM - 5:15 PM
- Hot Air Balloon Night Glow	5:20 PM - 6:45 PM
- Crew and award night party	7:30 PM -

FEB 12 – 14 AOPA-P BORACAY FLY-IN

Mon	- Departure from Clark	10:00 AM
Tues	- Free day	
	- Beach party	7:00 PM

FEB 14 BORACAY-PUERTO PRINCESA - KOTA KINABALU FLIGHT

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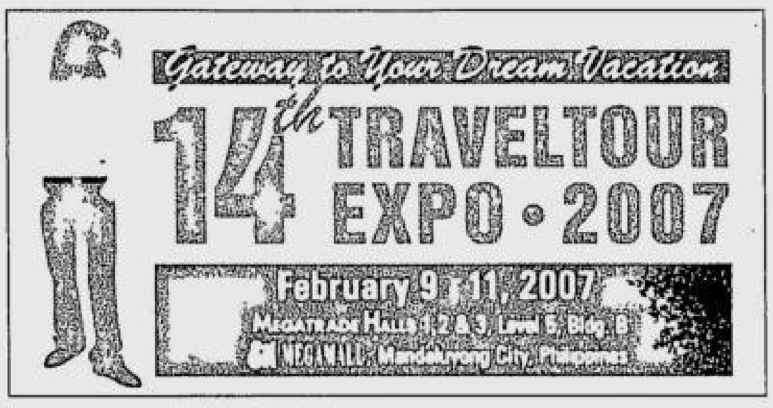

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Almighty Explorer	A118
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Arpan Air Inc.	C221, C222
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Atlantis Dive Resort	C161
Autohub Group	A19
Avilon Zoo	C56
Baron Travel Corp.	C221, C222, C223, C 224, C225
Bataan Tourism CFI	C36
BCS Systems & Tech. Inc.	A113, A114 & A115
Beadworx	A18
Beauty Holidays	C107
Bellevue Hotel, The	C158
Best Cruises N' Resorts	C266
Blue Cross Insurance, Inc.	C75
Blue Water Day Spa	C17
BMG For Seraph Hotel	C134
Boracay Regency Hotel	C184
Boracay Tropics	C185
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Carfel Vistamar Inc.	C15
Casino Filipino	C140, C141, C142 & C143
Caylabne Bay Resort	C12
Cebu Pacific	C105, C106, C107, C108, C109 & C110
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China Airlines	C53
China Tourist Office	D231
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Macau Government Tourist Office	D212 & D213
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Singapore Airlines	D242
Singapore Tourism Board	D258, D259 & D260
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09 February 2007

10:30 - 11:00AM	**Cutting of the Ribbon and Exhibit Tour to be led by** Location: Back of registration counter	**Hon. Richard Gordon** Senator Senate
		Hon. Oscar Palabyab Undersecretary Department of Tourism
		Mr. Jose C. Clemente III President Philippine Travel Agencies Association (PTAA)
		Mr. Marciano C. Ragaza Chairman – TTE 2007 Organizing Committee Philippine Travel Agencies Association (PTAA)
	Assisted by:	**Mr. Henry So Uy** Executive Vice President - Commercial Group & Executive Assistant to the Chairman & CEO Philippine Airlines
		Mr. Felix Cruz VP – Marketing Support Philippine Airlines
		Mr. Robert Dolina Segment Business Manager Strategy and Business Support Globe Telecom
		Mr. Andrew Ling Regional Manager – Philippines Galileo by Travelport
		Ambassador Yehoshua Sagi Embassy of Israel
		Ms. Erlinda T. Santiago VP for Marketing & Sales Air Philippines Corp.
11:00 – 11:10 AM	**Invocation**	**Philippine Airlines Choir**
	National Anthem	**Rogelio B. Peñaverde Jr.**
11:10 – 11:15 AM	**Welcome Remarks**	**Mr. Marciano C. Ragaza** Chairman – TTE 2007 Organizing Committee
11:15 – 11:25 AM	**President's Address**	**Mr. Jose C. Clemente III** PTAA President
11:25 – 11:30 AM	**Introduction of Guest Speaker**	**Mr. Jose C. Clemente III**
11:30 – 11:40 AM	**Address of Guest Speaker**	**Hon. Oscar Palabyab** Undersecretary Department of Tourism
11:40 – 11:45 AM	**Introduction of Keynote Speaker**	**Mr. Marciano C. Ragaza**
11:45 – 11:55 PM	**Address of Keynote Speaker**	**Hon. Richard Gordon** Senator Senate
11:55 – 12:05 PM	**The TDG Divos Performance**	
	DECLARE EXHIBIT OPEN	**Mr. Jose C. Clemente III** **Mr. Marciano C. Ragaza**
	Master of Ceremonies	**Mr. Ricky Davao**

Malaysia voted world's best destination

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Other categories rated by the readers ranged from best international hotel chain, best airline to best airport in the world.

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Those who will avail of their very low international airfare and value-laden tour packages will get instant gifts and will also have a chance to win various household appliances. Likewise, early bird visitors each day shall receive giveaways from Skynet Travel.

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3 Day Travel Expo
@ SM MegaMall
February 9,10 & 11, 2007
VISIT OUR BOOTHS, #s D198-199, D210, D220
to avail of very low domestic/international airfare & packages. Get exciting gifts & surprises!
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Manila Office: TEL. 400.0509 to 10/ 521-7596 MOBILE: 0921.445.1778 / 0922.845.1778
Ortigas Ctr Branch: TEL. 633.2399 / 633.9976 / 635.6211 / 631.8354 MOBILE: 0915.939.7681 NAITAS
NCLEX
HKG 168 Saipan 405 Guam 413
HOLY WEEK BLOCKINGS (GUARANTEED SEATS & HOTELS)
Hongkong — regular — w/ Disney Day Tour
29Mar-01Apr 4D/3N 309 369
30Mar-01Apr 3D/2N 258 318
05Apr-08Apr 4D/3N 349 409
06Apr-08Apr 3D/2N 319 379
Bangkok 04Apr-08Apr 5D/4N
Singapore 05Apr-08Apr 4D/3N
Kuala Lumpur 05Apr-08Apr 4D/3N
Boracay (GUARANTEED SEATS & HOTELS)
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Apr20-Apr22 3D/2N P9,000
3N Shenzhen 69
1N HKG +2N Shenzhen 119
2N HKG +1N Shenzhen 149
2N Shenzhen +1N Macau 169
3N Hongkong 179
1N Shenzhen+1N HKG +1N Macau 189
1N Macau+1N HKG + 1N Shenzhen 209
1N Macau+2N HKG+2N Shenzhen 288
1N HKG + 1N Shenzhen + 3N SHA + 2N Beijing 299
HONGKONG DISNEYLAND
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Bangkok 3N 85
Kuala Lumpur 3N
Singapore 3N 129
Jakarta 3N 138
Kuala+Genting Highlands 4D/3N 155
Tri-City 4D/3N (S'pore/Malaysia/Indonesia) 179
Saigon 3/2DN 199
Macau 4D/3N 209
Brunei free & easy 3D/2N 229
2N Bkk + 2N Brunei 5D/4N 275
Singapore w/ Malaysia overland 6D/5N 322
Taipei 3D/2N 329
Guam 3D/2N 343
4-City 5D/4N S'pore/Malaysia/Indonesia/Brunei 359
Palau 3D/2N 379
Sydney 4D/3N 730
Holy Land 9D/8N 1650
Wonders of Egypt 9D/8N 1780
Magic of Turkey 12D/11N 1863
European Encounter 14D/13N 1998
Cebu P2859
Bohol P3950
Palawan 3D/2N P5149

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February 9 – 11, 2007 Megatrade Hall of SM Megamall, Mandaluyong City

Kota Kinabalu Eco - Adventure 3D2N
From: USD63.00 (3D2N)
Experience nature in the land of the extremes. Trek the highest mountain in South East Asia, witness the world's largest flower and play with the world's largest primate.
Wintrex Travel
Booths: C288, C289, C296, C297

High at Genting 3D2N
From: USD113.00 (3D2N)
Genting Tour is a highly recommended fun-filled tour. Genting Highlands, dubbed as the entertainment city in the sky, is a one-stop-travel destination which is not to be missed when in Malaysia.
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Colorful Kuala Lumpur 4D3N
From: USD105.00 (4D3N)
The attractions, shopping outlets and restaurants are as diverse as the culture, people and religion, a destination like no other.
Las Palmas Tours and Travel
Booths: C253, C254 and C255

Kuala Selangor Fireflies 3D2N
From: USD136.00 (3D2N)
Have a sumptuous dinner at a local restaurant by the riverfront of Selangor River then proceed for a boat ride to Kampung Kuantan, one of the two places in the world where millions of fireflies can be seen flashing their "lights."
Horizon Travel and Tours
Booths: C192, C193, C200, C201

Historical Malacca 3D2N
From: USD88.00 (3D2N)
Travel back 600 years as you visit Malacca City. Discover Malacca's Chinese temples, A Famosa Portugese Fort, St. Paul's Hill and Jonker Street, Malaysia's best antique row.
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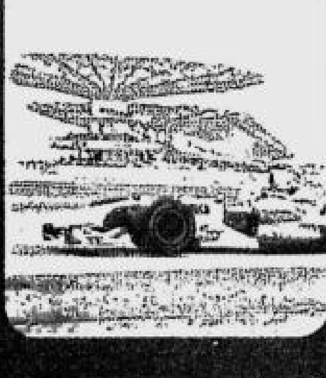

Sunway Holiday 3D2N
From: USD 83.00 (3D2N)
Experience fun and excitement at Malaysia's premium theme park! Cool off on an exhilarating escapade at Sunway Lagoon Water Park, and top it up with a mind boggling spin through the Sunway Lagoon Adventure Park.
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One Golden Celebration
FAST CARS
FAST MUSIC
FAST TOWN
YOU BETTER BUCKLE UP.

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ZOOMING AROUND TOWN
24 MAR - 22 APR 2007
MALAYSIA GP SALE • KL VINTAGE & CLASSIC CARS CONCOURS • KL AUTO FESTIVAL • F1 CARS STREET DEMO • KLGP CITY WEEKEND FESTIVAL • KL STREET ARTS FESTIVAL • PETRONAS MALAYSIAN F1 GRAND PRIX: 7 - 8 APR 2007, SEPANG INTERNATIONAL CIRCUIT
Join us at our golden celebration!

F1 Grand Prix Extreme 4D3N
From: USD269 (4D3N)
The Petronas Malaysian F1 Grand Prix brings the world's top race car drivers together on one of the most challenging circuits in the world, Malaysia's Sepang International Circuit.
Baron Travel
Booths: C221, C222, C223, C224, C225

Malaysian Cultural Night 3D2N
From: USD 118.00 (3D2N)
After a night tour, proceed to an exclusive Malay restaurant for a sumptuous dinner, and at the same time be delighted to a spectacular array of different Malay dances.
Horizon Travel and Tours
Booths: C192, C193, C200, C201

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Tel: (632) 817 4581 Fax: (632) 812 0770 Email: mtpb.manila@tourism.gov.my
Malaysia Truly Asia

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HKG 168 Saipan 405 Guam 413

HOLY WEEK BLOCKINGS (GUARANTEED SEATS & HOTELS)

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Bangkok 04Apr-08Apr 5D/4N
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3N Shenzhen 69
1N HKG +2N Shenzhen 119
2N HKG +1N Shenzhen 149
2N Shenzhen +1N Macau 169
3N Hongkong 179
1N Shenzhen+1N HKG +1N Macau 189
1N Macau+1N HKG + 1N Shenzhen 209
1N Macau+2N HKG+2N Shenzhen 288
1N HKG + 1N Shenzhen + 2N SHA + 2N Beijing 299

HONGKONG DISNEYLAND
2N Hongkong w/ Disney Day Tour 188
3N Shanghai +2N Shenzhen w/ Disney Day Tour 199
1N Hongkong + 1N Disneyland 249
2N Hongkong + 1N Disneyland 268
1N Macau+1N HKG+1N Shenzhen w/ Disney Day Tour 279
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Bangkok 3N 85
Kuala Lumpur 3N 129
Singapore 3N 129
Jakarta 3N 138
Kuala+Genting Highlands 4D-3N 155
Tri-City 4D/3N (S'pore/Malaysia/Indonesia) 179
Saigon 3/2DN 199
Macau 4D/3N 209
Brunei free & easy 3D/2N 229
2N Bkk + 2N Brunei 5D 4N 275
Singapore w/ Malaysia overland 6D-5N 322
Taipei 3D/2N 329
Guam 3D/2N 343
4-City 5D/4N S'pore Malaysia/Indonesia/Brunei 359
Palau 3D/2N 379
Sydney 4D/3N 730
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Malaysia

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February 9 – 11, 2007
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USD63.00 (3D2N)
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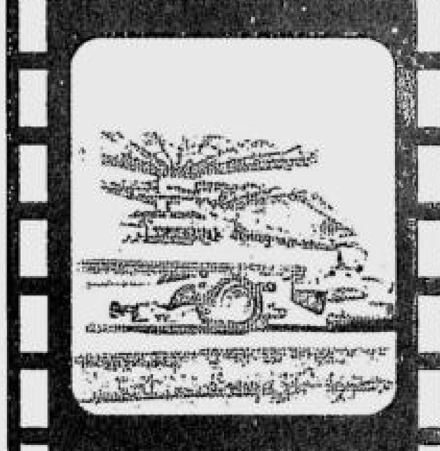

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USD 83.00 (3D2N)
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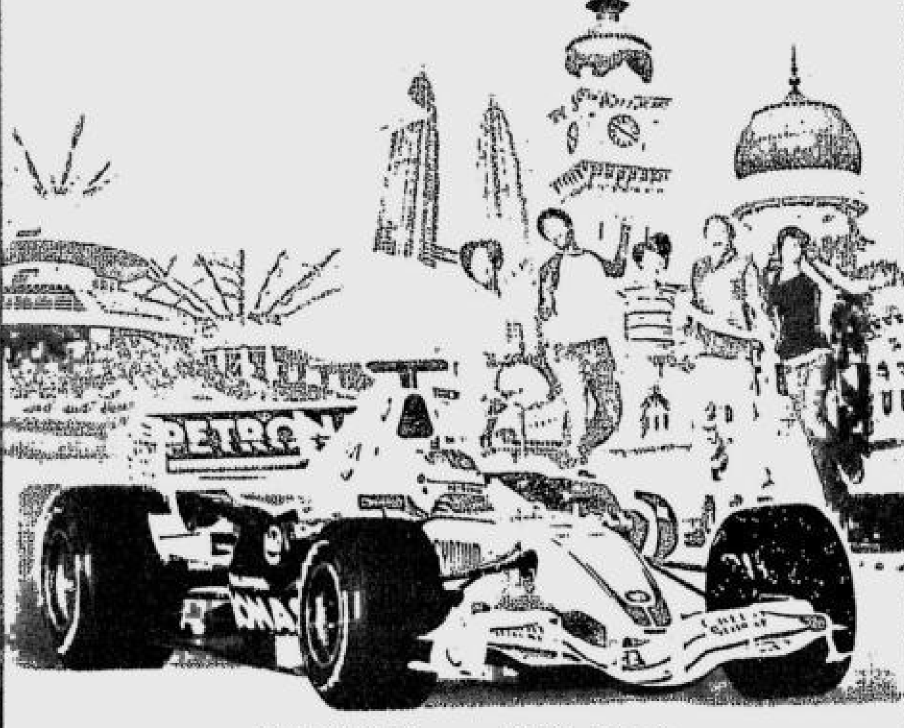

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ZOOMING AROUND TOWN
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• KLGP CITY WEEKEND FESTIVAL • KL STREET ARTS FESTIVAL
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Join us at our golden celebration!

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USD269 (4D3N)
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Tel: (632) 817 4581 Fax: (632) 812 0770 Email: mtpb.manila@tourism.gov.my
Malaysia Truly Asia

RETAKE OF PRECEDING FRAME

GLOBE INTERNATIONAL SERVICES AND GLOBE BROADBAND SUPPORT 14TH TRAVELTOUR EXPO 2007

The leading telecommunications company, Globe through Globe International Services and Globe Broadband recently affirmed their support of the 14th TravelTour Expo 2007 scheduled on 9 to 11 February 2007 at the SM Megatrade Halls.

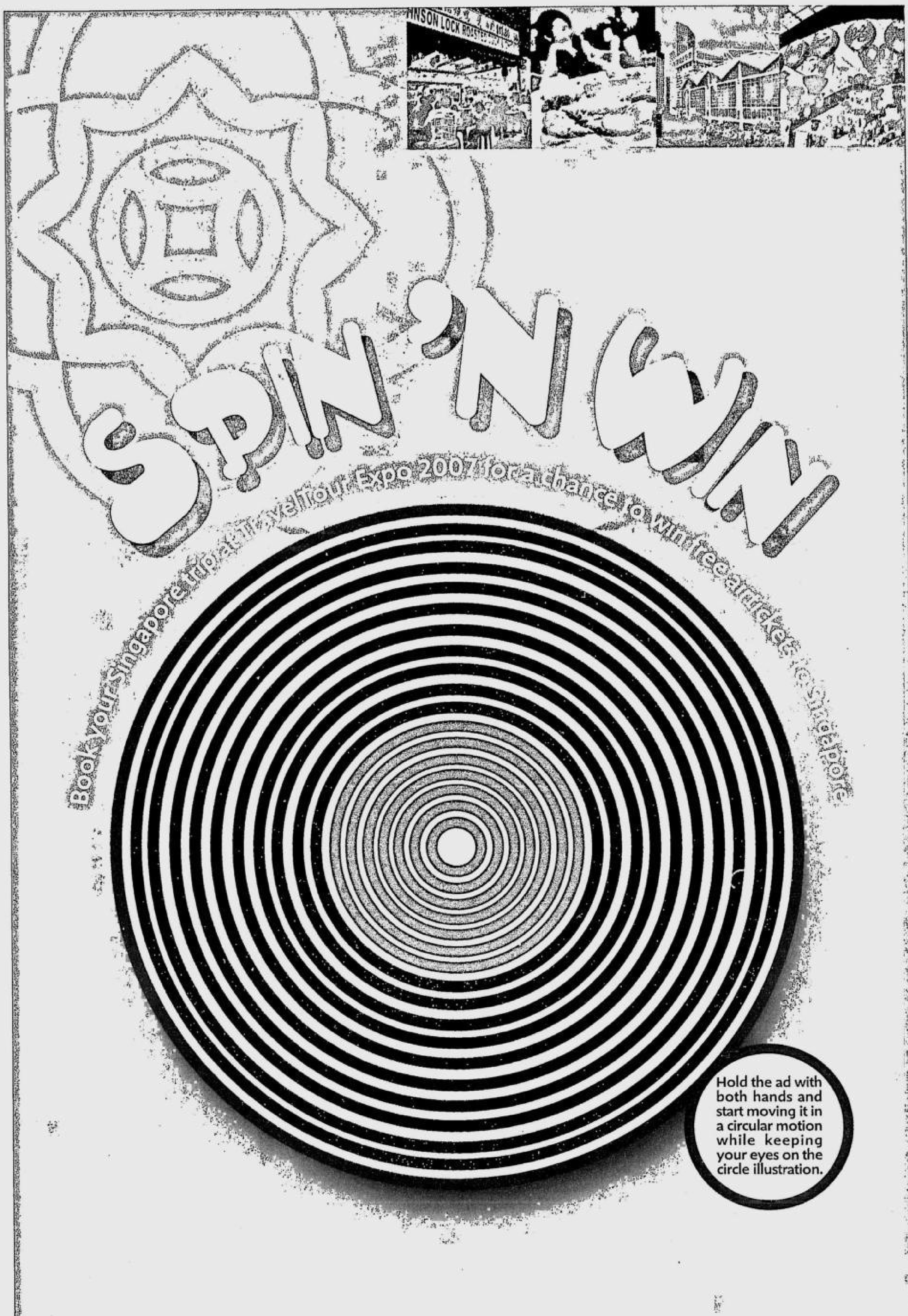
Sealing the agreement are (from left), Belle Barrameda, Senior Brand Manager for Marketing Services of Globe Bizworks, Jose C. Clemente III, PTAA President and Co-chairman of the TravelTour Expo Organizing Committee, Alexandra Bello, Head of Globe International Services and Ms. Annette R. Feliciano, past PTAA President.

TRAVELTOUR EXPO SPONSOR

The Embassy of Israel is participating in the 14th TravelTour Expo 2007, the ultimate destination for the best travel deals as a bronze sponsor. Signing the agreement are (from left) Jose C. Clemente III, PTAA president and co-chair of the TravelTour Expo Organizing Committee, Nissim Palomo, consul of the Embassy of Israel and Annette R. Feliciano, past PTAA president.

AIR PHILIPPINES SIGN UP AS AIRLINE SPONSOR OF PTAA TRAVELTOUR EXPO

Signing the agreement are (seated from left) Jose C. Clemente III, PTAA President and Co-chair, TTE organizing Committee, Erlinda Santiago VP for Sales of Air Philippines and Lulu Velasco, sponsorship and solicitation committee of TTE. Witnessing the signing of the agreement are (standing from left) Trippy, the official mascot of the TravelTour Expo (TTE), Annette Feliciano, TTE organizing committee adviser, JP Cabalza, hotels and resorts committee chair, Maucie Cuna, travel agents committee chair.


SPIN 'N WIN
Book your Singapore trip at TravelTour Expo 2007 for a chance to win free air tickets to Singapore
Hold the ad with both hands and start moving it in a circular motion while keeping your eyes on the circle illustration.

Come to the Philippine Travel Agencies Association's (PTAA) 14th TravelTour Expo 2007 at SM Megamall's Megatrade Halls 1, 2 & 3 on February 9-11. Avail yourselves of travel packages to Singapore (minimum 4 days/3 nights) from participating travel agencies/airlines, then visit us at the Singapore Tourism Board-Philippines' Booth at D258-D260, International Pavilion. You'll get to spin the roulette for a chance to win exciting prizes including roundtrip air tickets to Singapore. So why wait? MAKE YOUR TRAVEL PLANS NOW!

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Celebrity Cruises

EUROPE

12N SPRING IN EUROPE
(London-Barcelona)
Celebrity's "Millennium"
Sail Date: 21 April 2007

Prices Starting From:	CRUISE ONLY	FLY / CRUISE
Interior Stateroom	$ 1,210	$ 2,210
Ocean View Stateroom	$ 1,520	$ 2,520

10N W. MED. CIRCLE CRUISE
(Barcelona RT)
Celebrity's "Millennium"
Sail Date: 03 May 2007

Prices Starting From:	CRUISE ONLY	FLY / CRUISE
Interior Stateroom	$ 1,330	$ 2,280
Ocean View Stateroom	$ 1,560	$ 2,510

14N SCANDINAVIA & RUSSIA CRUISE
(Barcelona RT)
Celebrity's "Constellation"
Sail Date: 19 May 2007

Prices Starting From:	CRUISE ONLY	FLY / CRUISE
Interior Stateroom	$ 2,130	$ 3,080
Ocean View Stateroom	$ 2,340	$ 3,290

11N EASTERN MEDITERRANEAN CRUISE
(Barcelona RT)
Celebrity's "Galaxy"
Sail Date: 21 May 2007

Prices Starting From:	CRUISE ONLY	FLY / CRUISE
Interior Stateroom	$ 1,180	$ 2,130
Ocean View Stateroom	$ 1,420	$ 2,370

12N SCANDINAVIA & RUSSIA CRUISE
(London RT)
RCI's "Jewel of the Seas"
Sail Date: 25 May 2007

Prices Starting From:	CRUISE ONLY	FLY / CRUISE
Interior Stateroom	$ 1,710	$ 2,660
Ocean View Stateroom	$ 1,950	$ 2,900

7N MEDITERRANEAN CRUISE
(Barcelona RT)
RCI's "Voyager of the Seas"
Sail Date: 26 May 2007

Prices Starting From:	CRUISE ONLY	FLY / CRUISE
Interior Stateroom	$ 880	$ 1,830
Ocean View Stateroom	$ 1,270	$ 2,220

ALASKA & PACIFIC NORTHWEST

7N WEST COAST WINE CRUISE
(San Francisco-Vancouver)
Celebrity's "Mercury"
Sail Date: 27 April 2007

Prices Starting From:	CRUISE ONLY
Interior Stateroom	$ 360
Ocean View Stateroom	$ 470

5N LOS ANGELES TO VANCOUVER CRUISE
RCI's "Vision of the Seas"
Sail Date: 29 April 2007

Prices Starting From:	CRUISE ONLY
Interior Stateroom	$ 280
Ocean View Stateroom	$ 370

7N ALASKA HUBBARD GLACIER CRUISE
(Vancouver RT)
Celebrity's "Mercury"
Sail Date: 11 May 2007

Prices Starting From:	CRUISE ONLY	FLY / CRUISE
Interior Stateroom	$ 640	$ 1,590
Ocean View Stateroom	$ 790	$ 1,740

7N ALASKA NORTHBOUND CRUISE
(Vancouver-Seward)
RCI's "Radiance of the Seas"
Sail Date: 18 May 2007

Prices Starting From:	CRUISE ONLY
Interior Stateroom	$ 600
Ocean View Stateroom	$ 860

CARIBBEAN

7N WESTERN CARIBBEAN CRUISE
(Miami RT)
RCI's "Freedom of the Seas"
Sail Date: 04 March 2007

Prices Starting From:	CRUISE ONLY	FLY / CRUISE
Interior Stateroom	$480!!!	$ 1,430
Ocean View Stateroom	$ 1,350	$ 2,300

BAJA MEXICO

3N BAJA MEXICO *EASTER CRUISE!!!*
(Los Angeles RT)
RCI's "Monarch of the Seas"
Sail Date: 06 April 2007

Prices Starting From:	CRUISE ONLY	FLY / CRUISE
Interior Stateroom	$ 230	$ 980
Ocean View Stateroom	$ 270	$ 1.020

MEXICAN RIVIERA

7N MEXICAN RIVIERA CRUISE
(Los Angeles RT)
RCI's "Vision of the Seas"
Sail Date: 15 April 2007

Prices Starting From:	CRUISE ONLY	FLY / CRUISE
Interior Stateroom	$ 460	$ 1,210
Ocean View Stateroom	$ 575	$ 1,325

PANAMA CANAL

10N ROUNDTRIP CANAL *EASTER CRUISE!!!*
(Miami RT)
RCI's "Brillance of the Seas"
Sail Date: 06 April 2007

Prices Starting From:	CRUISE ONLY	FLY / CRUISE
Interior Stateroom	$ 1,050	$ 2,000
Ocean View Stateroom	$ 1,610	$ 2,560

****All rates and cabin availability are subject to change without prior notice*

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Cebu: Tel. Nos. (032) 255-6095 to 96
Fax (032) 254-5344
e-mail: ftdcebu@yahoo.com
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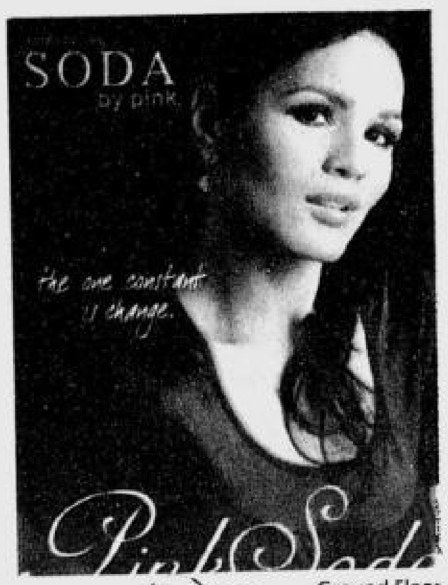
www.royalcaribbean.com or visit www.celebrity.com
See us at the Traveltour Expo at
SM Megamall Mandaluyong on Feb. 9-11, 2007
at Booth No. C221-C225

SM SUPERCENTER VALENZUELA

SHOP in the Name of Love

Mallwide Sale on February 16, 17, 18


SODA by pink
the one constant is change.
Pink Soda

Ground Floor

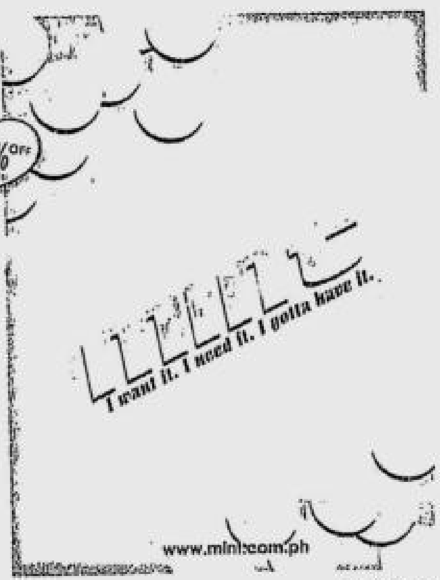
50% OFF ON SELECTED ITEMS

EO
executive optical

Ground Floor

UP TO 50% OFF ON SELECTED ITEMS

UP TO 10% OFF ON SELECTED ITEMS


I want it. I need it. I gotta have it.
www.mini.com.ph

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20%

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LOVE ME
marcella

2nd Floor

20%

2nd Floor

Bag & Sandals

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sabella
sale
up to 50% OFF
Feb. 01-28 2007

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Ideal VISION CENTER
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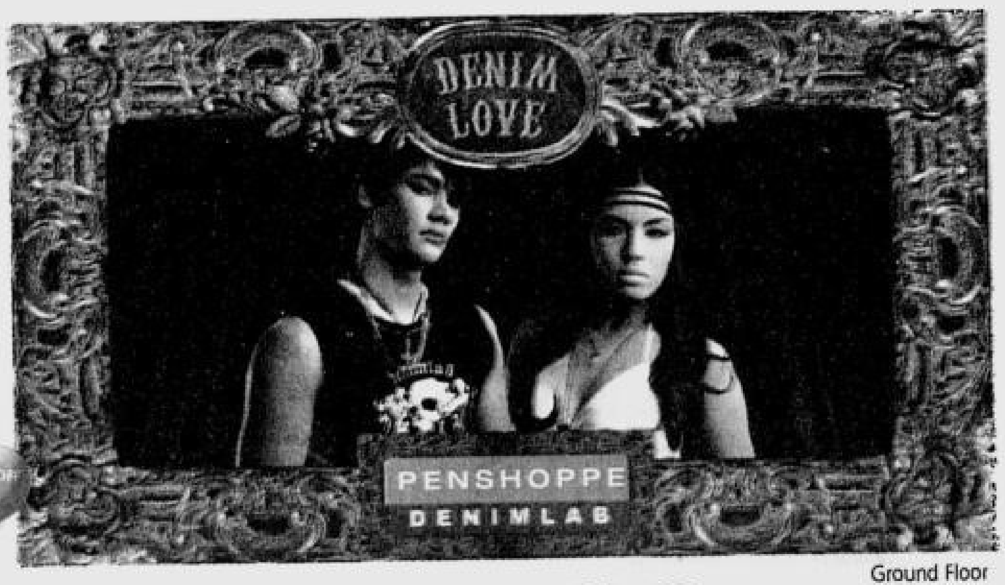
Ground Floor

Fendi, Oakley, & Tommy Hilfiger Eyewear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PENSHOPPE
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JEWELRY CENTER
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SM SUPERCENTER VALENZUELA

Per DTI-NCR Permit No. 0372, Series of 2007

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from the makers of Xtreme

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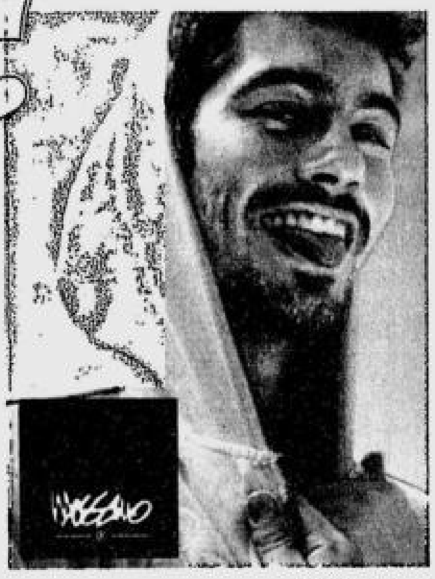
SM SUPERMALLS

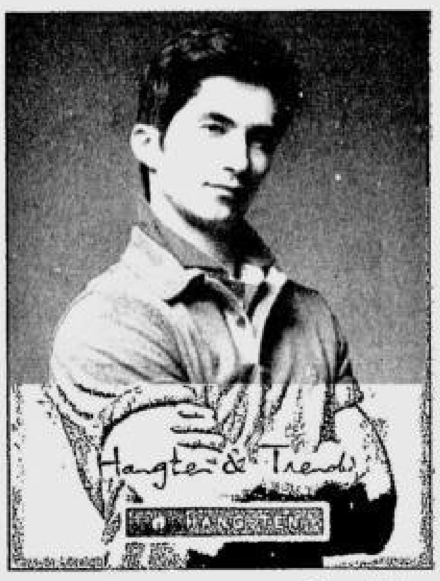
Per DTI-NCR Permit # 0372, Series of 2007

SM
SUPERCENTER VALENZUELA

Have A Hearty SHOP



Ground Floor


Hangten & Trends
HANG TEN

Ground Floor

Ground Floor

2nd Floor

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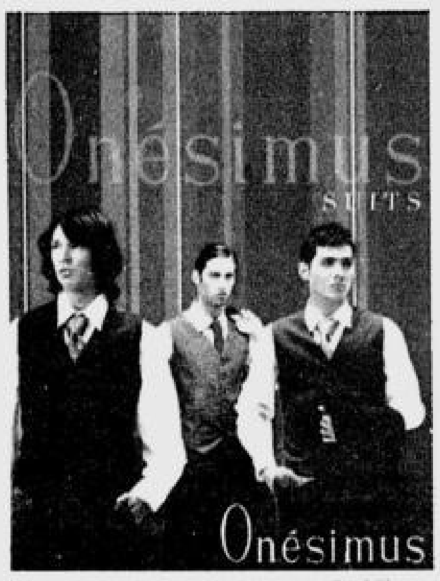
50%


Onésimus
SUITS
Onésimus

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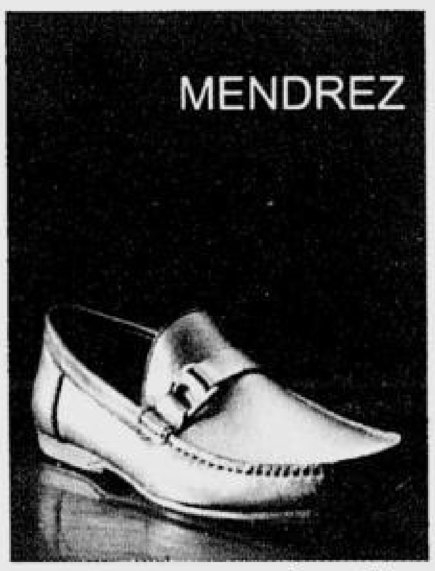

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RUSTY LOPEZ
www.rustylopez.com

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Valid from February 1 to 28, 2007.
Per DTI-NCR Permit # 0310, Series of 2007

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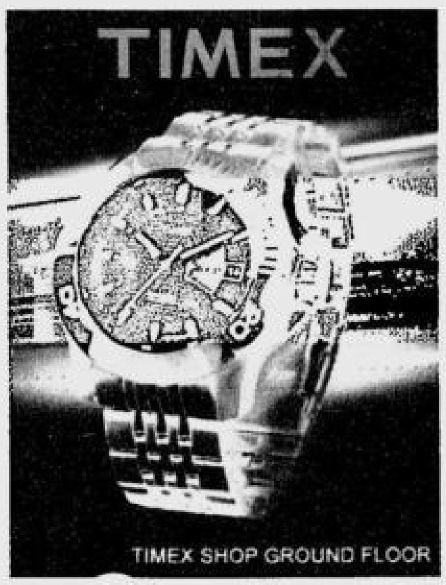
TIMEX
TIMEX SHOP GROUND FLOOR

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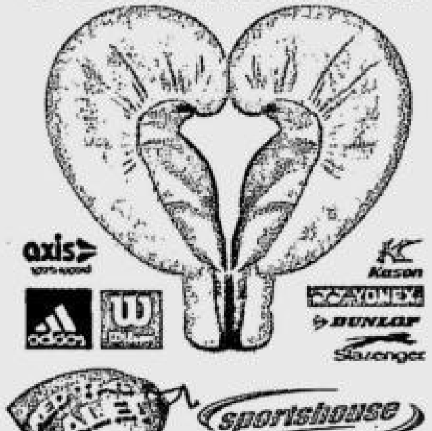
GIVE IN TO YOUR HEART'S DESIRE...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adidas
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Kason
YONEX
DUNLOP
Slazenger
SALE

sportshouse
G/F MAIN ENTRANCE, BESIDE BANCO DE ORO.

Ground Floor

TOBY'S

2nd Floor

For the Love of Sports
SALE
40

Spread Your Love This Month With New Gear For Your Sporty Someone.

HULK
MARVEL

"Making you a habit."
FILBAR'S

2nd Floor

Cupid's top picks
GRAMMY
THE DEVIL WEARS PRADA
favourites 2
Villoria

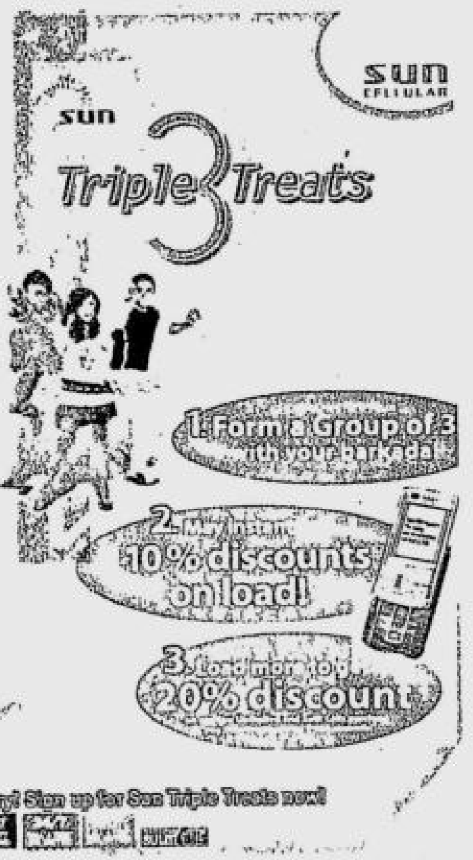
odyssey
MUSIC & VIDEO
2/F, SM Valenzuela

2nd Floor

SM SUPERMALLS

PING Spree

Mallwide Sale on February 16, 17, 18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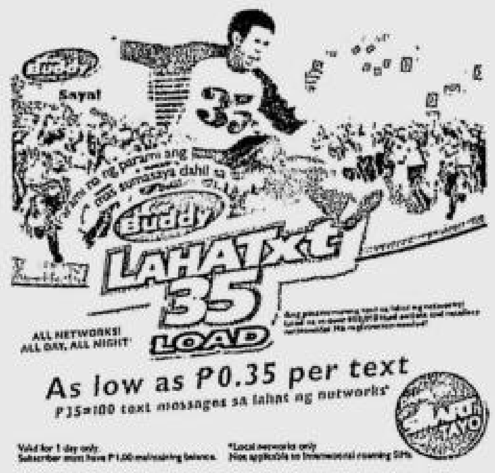
For more info call the Sun Hotline 395 - 0000 or text "TRIPLE HELP" TO 333

Per DTI-NCR Permit # 4182, Series of 2007

3rd Floor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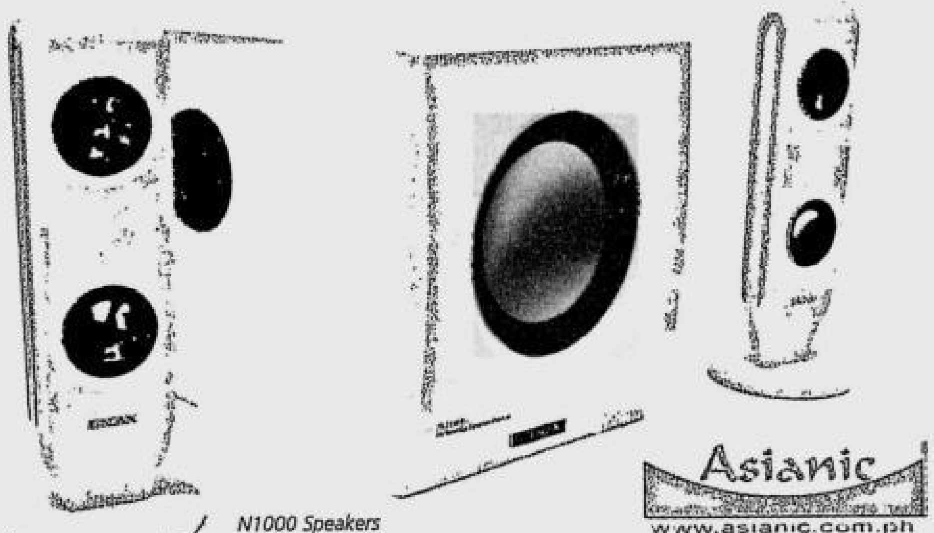
Asianic
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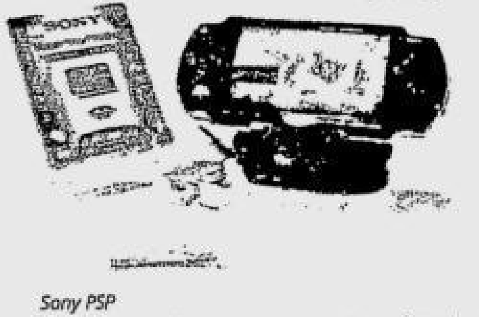
N1000 Speakers

3rd Floor

3rd Floor



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ASUS
HEART OF TECHNOLOGY

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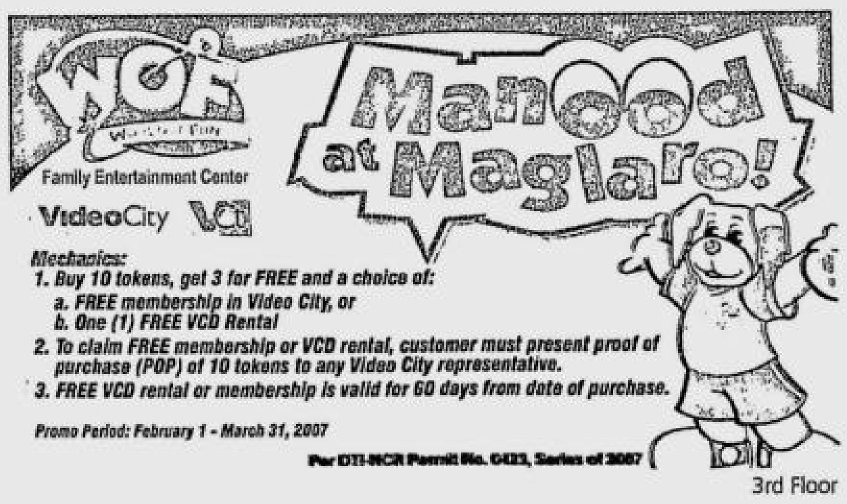
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   a. FREE membership in Video City, or
   b. One (1) FREE VCD Rental
2. To claim FREE membership or VCD rental, customer must present proof of purchase (POP) of 10 tokens to any Video City representative.
3. FREE VCD rental or membership is valid for 60 days from date of purchase.

Promo Period: February 1 - March 31, 2007

Per DTI-NCR Permit No. 0423, Series of 2007

3rd Floor

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UP TO 50% OFF ON SALE ITEMS

2nd Floor

Come In & Experience the Difference @...
Cyber

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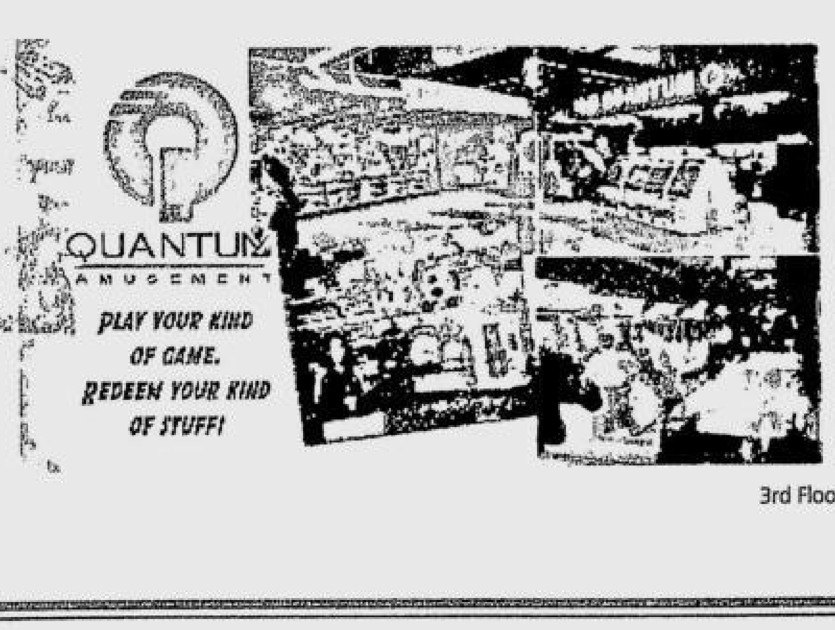
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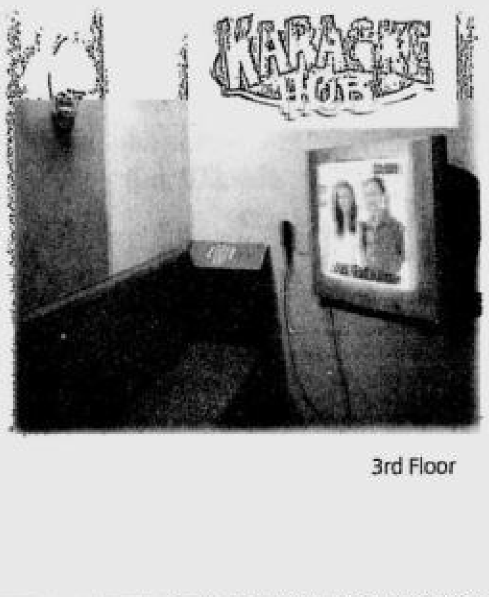
AMUSEMENT

PLAY YOUR KIND OF GAME.
REDEEM YOUR KIND OF STUFF!

3rd Floor

my playroom

3rd Floor



3rd Floor

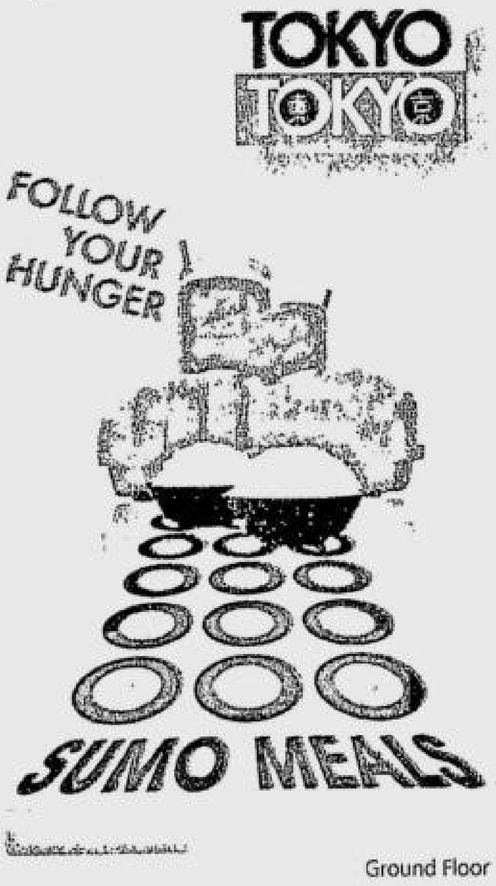
Per DTI-NCR Permit # 0372, Series of 2007

SM SUPERCENTER VALENZUELA

EAT

Your Heart Out

Mallwide Sale on February 16, 17, 18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Great food delivered fresh, hot and fast!
DIAL 2929-395
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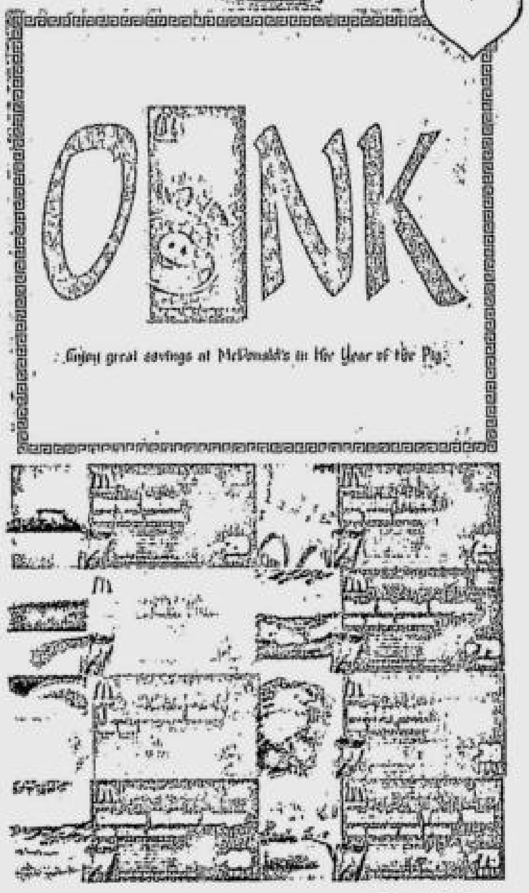
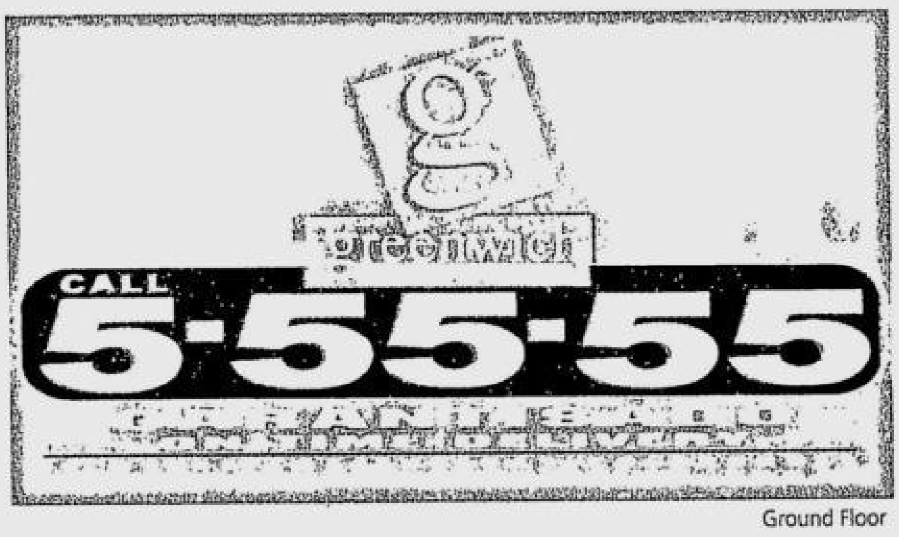
2nd Level SM Supercenter Valenzuela



Enjoy great savings at McDonald's in the Year of the Pig.

Ground Floor


greenwich
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Ground Floor

VALUE MEALS

2nd Floor

HAIL TO THE KING OF SISIG!
Congo Grille

Belgian Bites
Valentine Collection
I Love You!
flowers
chocolates*
stuffed toy
greeting card
All for P99!
Mister Donut

Ground Floor

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Hair and Make-Up
GOING

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This Valentine, transform into a more beautiful you!
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dermstrata
love yourself.

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GET THE LOOK

OF LOVE

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2nd Floor

SM SUPERMALLS

Per DTI-NCR Permit # 0372, Series of 2007